

FRANK L. STANTON'S

"Just from Georgia"

COMPILED BY HIS DAUGHTER,
MARCELLE STANTON MEGAHEE

CONTAINING
POEMS AND SAYINGS HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED
IN BOOK FORM

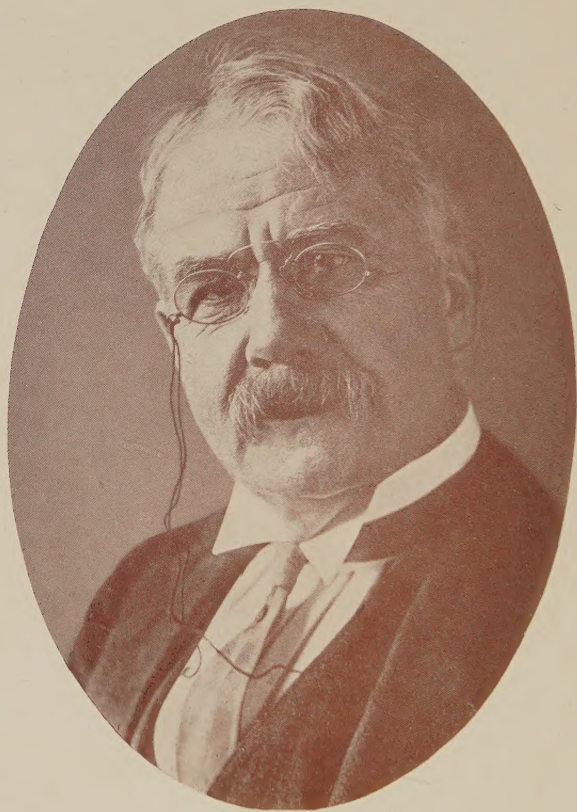
WITH A PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR

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By

The Stanton Family



Frank Stanton

DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF
AN AFFECTIONATE HUSBAND AND FATHER

BIOGRAPHICAL

Frank L. Stanton, the late poet laureate of Georgia, was born in Charleston, S. C., on February 22, 1857. His parents were Valentine and Katherine Rebecca Stanton.

At twelve years of age, young Stanton, while working as copy boy on The Savannah (Ga.) Morning News, began to contribute verse to the paper, attracting the attention of Joel Chandler Harris, author of the famous "Uncle Remus" stories. He remained on the staff of that paper from 1869 to 1887, working as a reporter and feature writer.

Toward the close of 1887, Mr. Stanton entered the weekly newspaper field as publisher of The Smithville News, Smithville, Ga. Here he had full opportunity for publication of his poetry and soon attracted national attention.

Mr. Stanton joined the staff of The Atlanta Constitution in 1889 as a feature writer and news reporter, and soon began to contribute verse and features in a special column, which continued thereafter for nearly forty years, the title of his column, "Just From Georgia," and his poems gaining world-wide fame.

"To Lizzie," Mr. Stanton's first published poem, is said to have been written by him when but eleven years of age. His last poem, "New Year Text," appeared in The Atlanta Constitution on Christmas morning, 1926, bringing to a close a life of "three score and ten years" of riches, his death coming at his home in Atlanta, Ga., on January 7, 1927.

A PREFACE AND A TRIBUTE

Sometimes it takes death, with all of its attendant sorrows, to impress the impelling force of truth.

All of us who had for years been associated with Frank L. Stanton knew of his ability, of his big heart, of his genius.

We knew of the great service—unselfish, and inspired only by his love of human kind—that he did through the happiness and cheer that he carried to otherwise cheerless hearthstones, and through the simple “logic of the masses” that made people better, and that made brighter the dark corners of life—

But it took the call that carried him home “over the river’s foam” to bring us to a full realization that he was the one great singer of the world who had the touch sufficiently magnetic to put the prince and the peasant on the same plane of democracy, the rich and the poor on the same pedestal of human appeal.

Born in the dark hours just preceding the civil war, he spoke the language of simple folk, because through it he appealed for a fuller understanding of those whose hearts he unbosomed.

The language of the upland negro he used to concentrate about him the sympathy of those who had been taught to despise him; the

language of the native "cracker" he used because he carried with him a simple but impressive philosophy that, for others, made life's burdens the easier to bear, its problems easier of solution

And then again he would rise to the very peaks of the classic, and sing in that faultless voice that would have graced the throne of Elizabeth.

Marvelous man! A poet born, not made! An interpreter and a salvager of human emotions! A "poet laureate" by the governor's commission—an honor never conferred in America before!

His "Mighty Lak' a Rose," and other songs that have for a generation stirred the souls of men and women wherever music soothes, rang out from church, the theater, the home—from across the vast spaces of the radio's circumference—as melodious tributes to a stilled but worshipped heart.

God bless him! He was the poet of the children, and on their angel wings was lifted to heaven in their praise; the poet of the lowly, whom he cheered and made happier; the poet of the mighty whom he impressed with the duty—and the responsibility of power and of service; the poet of the trenches, whose boys he spurred on to patriots' victory; the poet and the philosopher of everybody—he who dissipated the clouds, and brought to the surface of the earth the full glow of the sun to bless humanity with its universal light and warmth.

JAMES A. HOLLOMON.

GOING HOME

Adieu, sweet friends,—I have waited long
 To hear the message that calls me home,
And now it comes like a low, sweet song
 Of welcome over the river's foam:
And my heart shall ache and my feet shall roam
 No more—no more: I am going home!

Home! where no storm—where no tempest
 raves,
 In the light of the calm, eternal day;
Where no willows weep over lonely graves
 And the tears from our eyelids are kissed
 away.
And my soul shall sigh, and my feet shall roam
 No more—no more: I am going home!

WEARYIN' FOR YOU

Jest a-wearyin' fer you—
All the time a-feelin' blue;
Wishin' fer you—wonderin' when
You'll be comin' home again;
Restless—don't know what to do—
Jest a-wearyin' fer you!

Keep a-mopin' day by day:
Dull—in everybody's way;
Folks they smile an' pass along
Wonderin' what on earth is wrong;
'Twouldn't help 'em if they knew—
Jest a-wearyin' fer you.

Mornin' comes; the birds awake
Used to sing so fer your sake!
But there's sadness in the notes
That come trillin' from their throats!
Seem to feel your absence, too—
Jest a-wearyin' fer you.

Evenin' comes: I miss you more
When the dark is in the door;
'Pears jest like you orter be
There to open it fer me!
Latch goes tinklin'—thrills me through,
Sets me wearyin' fer you!

SWEET LITTLE WOMAN OF MINE

She ain't any bit of a angel—

 This sweet little woman o' mine;

She's jest a plain woman,

An' purty much human—

 This sweet little woman o' mine.

Fer what would I do with an angel

 When I looked for the firelight's shine?

When six little sinners

Air wantin' their dinners?

 No! Give me this woman o' mine!

I've hearn lots o' women called “angels,”

 An' lots o' 'em thought it wuz fine;

But give 'em the feathers,

An' me, in all weathers,

 This sweet little woman o' mine.

I jest ain't got nuthin' agin 'em—

 These angels—they're good in their line,

But they're sorter above me!

Thank God that she'll love me—

 This dear little woman o' mine.

THE HOUSE WITHOUT A SOUL

I.

Something is missed from the meadows—something of bloom and of beam;
Morning is less than the morning, and Twilight's a sigh in a dream.
Lonesome—the lilies that loved her, the vine-flowers droop 'round the place
Where once they looked in at the window and smiled in her beautiful face.

II.

The house seems the Shadow of Silence, yet speaks as the Silence will speak
When in halls that are curtained with shadows a loved, vanished Presence we seek;
When each moment that knew her was golden, with life in love's tender control;
But now 'tis a Home with the heart gone—a House without even a soul!

III.

For though Love has gone but a journey, it has taken the light of a life;
The red of the rose, and the beauty of "Mother," and "Sweetheart," and "Wife;"
The green o' the hills and the valleys, the blue o' the shadowless skies,—
All earth lacks the luster God gave it when lost to the light of her eyes.

IV.

I'm one in a dream, sleeping—waking—a
 strange spirit, dwelling apart;
 And, calling: “Sweetheart!” to the Silence, that
 only can echo: “Sweetheart!”
 I say to the flowers that miss her: “Not long for
 her touch shall you wait;
 Hark! a rustle of robes on the lawn there—a
 latch-clink, and . . . Love at the gate!”

V.

O, the wonderful worth of one woman!—Life's
 dross turned to gold at her touch!
 It's by the dull silence of absence you know
 that you love her so much!
 It's the ache of the silence around you—no love-
 tones to answer love's call;
 It's the place where the lost dreams are sighing:
 The House With No Soul tells it all!

VI.

Dream of her coming, rose-gardens, and wood-
 lands where wildflowers throng!
 Sing, birds, breast-deep in the blossoms! for you
 have been silent so long!
 Seas cannot sunder a heart's love: Love o'er the
 world claims his own;
 Give a house back the Soul that has left it, and
 a beautiful woman—her throne!

THE ONE FRIEND

When you're feeling lost and lonesome and the
storms of trouble blow

It's great to know God knows you when the
World don't know;

When you look from Life's dark windows and
you just can't glimpse the light.

To feel it warming up your soul—that there it's
shining bright!

If it wasn't for that feeling you would falter on
the way;

You couldn't bear the burden from the darkness
to the Day;

Life would be but shadows of a wilderness of woe

If you didn't know God knows you when the
World don't know.

You feel a Hand of healing for the hidden
wounds of years,—

A sense of comfort stealing o'er the terror and
the tears;

'Tis the rest that's for the weary—the gathered
thunders cease,

And the Silence sweet is singing of the song
whose word is "Peace."

The friends you love may leave you as the
thorny paths are trod,

But can loneliness bereave you of the living
Light of God?

Let the seas still rage around you—let all
"storms of sorrow fall,"

You know the Love that's found you: It's the
one Friend, after all.

SWEETES' LI'L' FELLER

Sweetes' li'l' feller—

Everybody knows;
Dunno what ter call 'im,
But he mighty lak' a rose!

Lookin' at his mammy

Wid eyes so shiny-blue,
Mek' you think dat heaven
Is comin' clost ter you!

W'en he's dar a-sleepin'

In his li'l place,
Think I see de angels
Lookin' thoo' de lace.

W'en de dark is fallin'—

W'en de shadders creep,
Den dey comes on tip-toe
Ter kiss 'im in his sleep.

Sweetes' li'l' feller—

Everybody knows;
Dunno what ter call 'im,
But he mighty lak' a rose!

KEEP A-GOIN'!

Ef you strike a thorn or rose,
 Keep a-goin'!
Ef it hails, or ef it snows,
 Keep a-goin'!
'Tain't no use to sit an' whine,
When the fish ain't on yer line;
Bait yer hook an' keep a-tryin'—
 Keep a-goin'!

When the weather kills yer crop,
 Keep a-goin'!
When you tumble from the top,
 Keep a-goin'!
S'pose you're out o' every dime,
Bein' so ain't any *crime*;
Tell the world you're feelin' *prime*—
 Keep a-goin'!

When it looks like all is up,
 Keep a-goin'!
Drain the sweetness from the cup,
 Keep a-goin'!
See the wild birds on the wing,
Hear the bells that sweetly ring,
When you feel like sighin' *sing*—
 Keep a-goin'!

THE NOBLE LIFE

Still we build, upon Life's way,
 On the wrecks of Yesterday;
 Make the nobler structure rise
 Where the old in ruin lies.
 In the barren fields and drear
 Sow the seed of harvests fair;
 In the gardens, lost in gloom,
 See the brighter roses bloom,
 Knowing ever that we stand
 In the hollow of God's Hand;
 So we build, upon Life's way
 On the wrecks of Yesterday.

JEAN

Jean—my Jean—with the eyes of light
 An' the beautiful, soft brown hair,
Do you know that I'm longin' for you tonight—
For your lips,—for the clasp of your hand so
 white,
 An' the thrill o' your voice so dear?

Jean—my Jean—of the glances bright,
 Where the smile shines through the tear,
Do you know that I'm callin' to you tonight
Where the seagulls cry like ghosts in flight,
 An' the dark falls lone an' drear?

Jean—my Jean—where the snow drifts white
 Through the answerless, icy air,—
Ah, would to God you were here tonight,
Braiding your beautiful tresses of light,
 An' that I were lying there!

—“Up From Georgia,” D. Appleton & Co.

AN OLD BOOK

I.

Dead and forgotten the writer lies—
Dust, in unknown earth,
But a book dies not as a dreamer dies—
Immortal from its birth.
Years since 'twas printed—many a score,
But here it is—propping a crazy door!

II.

Sad service, after the heyday years—
Perhaps under joyous skies;
Who cares now if 'twas written with tears—
Heard songs that solaced sighs?
If 'twas praised or damned in the days long
gone?
The critics die, but the books live on.

III.

Many there be where I pass each day—
Where the dust-dimmed bookshop stands,
And the bowed book-lovers, old and gray,
Turn their leaves with trembling hands,
They live when we deem their day is o'er,
Treasured, or propping a crazy door.

KETCHIN' ON

As poor as Job, I oft despair,
And find no morning anywhere,
But every time I think I'm "gone"
I find myself a-ketchin' on!

That note to meet—of ills the worst —
And not a dollar on the "First!"
The sleepless night—the hopeless dawn—
But, all at once, I'm ketchin' on!

That Sorrow, comin' up the slope,
From which it storms the stars of Hope;
The river—and the bridge is gone!—
"A sail! A sail!"—I'm ketchin' on!

O, toilers in the vineyards drear,
There's hope of Morning everywhere!
Up from the world the mists are drawn—
We're ketchin' on, we're ketchin' on!

IN THE STARLIGHT

I.

Let the whole world leave me—
Fortune have her will:
Someone, in the starlight,
Is dreaming of me still.

II.

Joy may slip his tether,
Grief may seek to kill:
Someone, in the starlight,
Is dreaming of me still.

III.

There, with the roses 'round her—
There where sweet memories thrill,
Someone, in the starlight,
Is dreaming of me still.

ALONE WITH THE HOUSE

I.

I don't make moan when they leave me so—
Alone with the House, an' the Long Ago,
For the young must be up an' out an' away :
My world is Winter, an' their's is May.
It's only the quiet that comes when they're
gone—
The stillness that talks when the dark's comin'
on ;
The sound of a step on the lonesome stairs,
An' a feelin' ; The shadders are sayin' their
prayers !
An' the Old Times, that ask you (they never
forget!) :
“Are you here yet?”

II.

It's jes' like they said it ! I look 'round to see
Jes' who is a-talkin' in that way to me ?
An' then, it's jes' like to the still place I say :
“Some one must keep house when the rest are
away ;
An' I try to be happy, an' sing me a song,
But some's been away—O so long ! O so long !
An' for all o' Life's blessin's, there's something
you lack—

The Light that has left you, an' never comes
back!

I've waited while many a sun rose an' set,—
“Yes, I'm here yet!”

III.

But sweet comes the thought to the old folks an'
gray:

There's a Providence purpose in lettin' 'em stay;
Not with hands that are folded—for rest-time to
pray,

For they still can keep house while the rest are
away!

They can wait, till fast 'round 'em the last
shadders creep;

They can work till it's Sundown, an' God sends
'em Sleep.

At the fireside-places, where little folks meet,
They feel on old faces a child's kisses sweet.
An' it's sweet to be livin'—for Love don't
forget,—

So, I'm here yet!

"OLD MAN NOAH"

Old Man Noah was the first weather man,
An' he heard the raincrow croak;—
The Thunder wasn't hummin',
But he sensed the flood a-comin',
An' this was the word he spoke:

"You better hustle round,
Stidder cumberin' the ground,
An' git your life-preservers
'Fore the thunder-trumpets sound!"

Old Man Noah, he told 'em, plain as day,
An' they said: "He's a dreamer o' the Dark!"
But he winked the other eye
As they mocked him, high and dry,
An' he kept the hammers flyin' on the Ark.

They was all struck dumb
When the Thunder beat the drum,
An' they yelled for life preservers
From the world to Kingdom Come!

Old Man Noah—better read the lesson plain!—
He's livin' in the rocky world today,
But they put him on the shelf—
Leave him talkin' to himself:
"He's nothin' but a dreamer, old and gray!"

They laugh before they win,
As new wonder-days begin';
Yet gray dreamers of the old days
Built the world they're livin' in.

REWARD

I

We have not lived in vain—
Though cruel cups our bleeding lips must drain,

II

If o'er Life's crumbling walls
One voice cries "Blessing!" ere the long night
falls!



We know folks who never grow old, for they
have a way of taking the joys of Youth's Spring-
time through the December gates of Life.

Jedgment Day looks fur off, an' dar's no con-
solation in de thought that it's all time a-comin'.

"MARCELLE"

I.

There is no sweeter place to dwell
Than here—Marcelle!
Could angels love you half so well
As I, Marcelle?
There's not in heaven an angel bright
Could match your living eyes of light!
God grant I'll never say goodnight
To you, Marcelle!

II.

What stories sweet hath heaven to tell
To you, Marcelle?
What echoes where their anthems swell,
Like yours, Marcelle?
There—where Faith makes a gilded dome
For all the shelterless that roam,
What like your kiss when I came home
To you, Marcelle?

III.

All sorrows which the day befell
Seemed faint, Marcelle!
I only knew you loved me well,
Marcelle—Marcelle!
A cabin door was home to me,
And in your Love's simplicity
Earth sweeter seemed than heaven could be,
Marcelle—Marcelle!

Against God's love I should rebel
If you, Marcelle,
Should break of Love the magic spell
That made Marcelle!
God would have nothing for me there,
Where shine His angels, crowned and fair,
Save your bright eyes and golden hair,
Marcelle—Marcelle!

Sometimes, after you've searched the hills
for Happiness you discover her in the humble
valley, training a vine to blossom at a cabin
door.

There's wisdom in the still tongue; the oyster
that has the pearl doesn't open its mouth about
it.

SAME AS YOU

In misery there's company—

When you're feelin' mighty blue,
Think: World has got its troubles
Same as you.

It's not alone you travel

Where the flowers lack the dew
The thorny road strikes others
Same as you.

We're goin' on together—

The old tunes yield to the new:
The rest must face the future
Same as you.

Satan wuz a angel in heaven, but lak de res'
er us, he couldn't stand prosperity.

Jedgment Day is all time travellin' to you,
but you persuades yo'self that it's goin' to hit
de other feller fust.

WHEN YOU SHALL COME AGAIN

I.

When you shall come again
You shall behold, in meadows sweet with rain,
The same white daisies that you knew of old;
For you the sunflower still shall burn in gold,
And every garden's sweets be manifold
When you shall come again.

II.

But something you will miss
When every rose is crimsoned with your kiss:
A dream—a memory—a touch—a tone—
Something that in the sweet past you have
known.
God grant you cry not then—“Alone! Alone!”
When you shall come again.

THIS LITTLE BOOK

This little book I prize far more
Than "volumes of forgotten lore,"
Unto this little book belongs
No thunder of a nation's wrongs—
Its only songs are simple songs.

But oh, what fancies o'er it flit!
And oh, the melody of it!
For here, when skies were bright above you
And fame and fortune sought to move you,
You sang that sweetest song—"I love you!"

Solomon used ter say he'd ruther have er
crust er bread an' peace in de family than a
fatted calf an' quarrelin', an' dat's des where
we reaches over ter shake hands wid him and
holler, "Amen!"

ON THE WAY

Thinkin' of the trials
That are waitin' on the way—
The rocky road of Jordan,
The Storms that dim the day;
But meet 'em and greet 'em
With sturdy strength, and then
You'll hear the Life-Judge saying:
“The trials make the Men!”

Some people don't go ter church kaze dey
don't hear de bell, but dey'll sho go ter Judg-
ment w'en Kunnel Gabrul blow his horn.

It's hard to beat the opera of the birds, with
a front seat on a pine log in a theater with a
roof of blossoms.

"JES' THE OLD WOMAN AN' ME"

"The task of Time is to roll away"

Them's the words that I allus say
Each Thanksgivin' an' Christmas Day.
For after you've reached three score an' ten
It goes like a gallopin' race-hoss then;
It's hardly here when away it's gone,
An' another Christmas comin' on!
Well, so it is, an' so 'twill be,
An' what Time's left round here, you see;
Jes' the old woman an'—me.

Jes' the old woman an' me . . . For long
We've walked the way with a sigh or song,
With never of anything goin' wrong
Till the children come to say good-bye:
And then the first star left the sky!
Till one by one they went away,
An' left us here, as you see today,
To travel together—old an' gray.
Nothin' 'round here, where they used to be,—
Jes' the old woman an'—me.

An' the seasons come, an' the seasons go,
An' lonesome an' long falls the winter's
snow
Where the roses of youthtime used to grow;
An' the Wind, when the feathery flakes are
tossed,

Seems allus singin' of something lost
 Something lost, that'll come no more—
 Gleams o' the dreams that have gone before;
 An' I hear myself to my own self say:
 “It's a lonesome world when you're old and
 gray!”

An' lonesome an' long falls the winter's
 snow

Yet Love still lives an' is glad to be
 With jes' the old woman an'—me.

Some o' these days o'er the River's foam
 We'll hear the message that calls us Home;
 An' if the Angel, crowned and fair,
 Should speak the challenge of “Who comes
 there?”

I'd say, where the saints in glory be:
 “Two tired travelers, as you see,—
 Jes' the old woman an'—me!”

THE SPRING ELUSIVE

I call you Spring no longer,
From flowery fields and sweet,
For when I sing of violets
You pelt me with your sleet!

And yet, I know, some morning,
When I am least aware,
You'll come, with lilies in your lap,
And sunshine in your hair!

The charm of the old bookshop fadeth not
with the years; and it's there the search for hid-
den treasure goes on forever and ever.

It wouldn't be such a cold world if we'd make
bonfires of the old stumbling blocks, and warm
up to Happiness.

WHEN THE LAST BELL RINGS

The house is in turmoil—

 We forgot the golden rule,
For the world is topsy-turvey
 When the last bell rings for school!

It's "Where's my book, an' where's my hat?

An' who's hid out my baseball bat?

An' I wonder where my knife is at?"

 When the last bell rings for school!

Two hours of preparation:—

 He knows the scholar's rule;

But he's ever in a fidget

 When the last bell rings for school!

It's "Where's my marbles? Where's my slate?

Tell Jimmy Johnson there, to wait!

It's half-past eight! I'm late! I'm late!"

 When the last bell rings for school!

ON A LONESOME ROAD AT NIGHT

I.

I don't believe in ghostes, but a skeery thing in
white,—

I never wants ter meet it on a lonesome
road at night,

De sollum trees all 'roun' you, an' de dark fum
lef' ter right—

Oh, I trimbles w'en I travels on a lonesome
road at night!

II.

Dar's folks what b'lieves in ghostes—hol' a
talkin' wid 'em too,

W'en de win' tell all his troubles an' de fire
burnin' blue;

But I tells 'em I ain't gifted fer ter see de skeery
sight,

Yit I trimbles w'en I travels on a lonesome
road at night!

III.

How come I allus feelin' sich a rattlin' in my
bones

W'en de Win' what look lak' nuthin', is
a-makin' er his moans?

How come I longs ter be dar, whar de home fire
fling his light—

A-trimblin' w'en I travels on a lonesome
road at night?

IV.

Oh, I trimbles! Kaze I tell you: De night so
black an' wide,

An' it 'pears des lak' somebody is a-walkin'
by my side!

I don't believe in ghostes, but I wants de wings
fer flight

Oh, I trimbles w'en I travels on a lonesome
road at night!

THE ONE LIGHT

There is no dim land of despair
While heaven still bends above;
The only lonely land is where
The gates are barred to Love.

BE THOU CONTENT

I.

Be thou content: Wherever Life be led
Some blessing in an undreamed hour is
sent;
The fields will answer every prayer for bread;
From the world's storms kind Love will shield
thy head,—
Dear Heart, be thou content!

II.

Be thou content and weep not if sad loss
Be thine,—if thorns about thy brow are
bent;
The gold of Life is greater than the dross;
Thou shalt find rest in shadows of thy cross,—
Dear Heart, be thou content!

HUMANITY

Not too much of flyin' high,
For then you'd never know
Of all your brothers travelin'
The rocky roads below.

No matter where you take your stand,
What blessin' crowns your cup,
Don't get too high to reach a hand
To lift a brother up.

A HAPPY LAND SONG

I.

A path for to take on every hand,
 An' sun an' star to show it,
But when you're right in the happy land,
 Please God, you never know it!
You think it's yonder, where the hills shine
 bright,
An' you're soon left lonesome where the owls
 sing night.

II.

An' you ford the river, an' you climb the hill
 Till the Thunder's self has found you;
The happy land hides from you still,
 An' the lightnin' plays around you.
It was far back there, where the skies are blue;
You passed that way, but you never knew!

A SONG OF MEMORIES

Are they lost to me always, the friends that
have left me,
The hearts of whom fortune so cruelly bereft
me;

Shall I know not again, in years that come after,
The thrill of their greeting, the ring of their
laughter?

Shall I clasp not again to my bosom in joy,
The hearts that I loved and worshipped when a
boy?

Though they wandered afar, and grew dim with
the years
Of a life and it's joys, and sorrows and fears.

Though they passed as a dream, yet their
memories shine

With angelical light, at my soul's inner shrine;
And I know I shall have them by night and by
day

When the storm and the tempest have vanished
away.

THE LITTLE ONE

I.

Come hither, little one—
Your life has just begun,
And though I walk the way with you,
The race of me is run!

II.

I cannot see your way—
Your winter, or your May.
And yet, for your sake, dearest, would
God Death might delay!

III.

Would I might linger on,
(All save your dear love gone!)
And walk with you to Sunset from
Portals o' the Dawn.

IV.

But oh, the swift, far flight
Of Time!—The death of Light!—
You kissed me, dear, Good-morning,
And I kissed you—Good-night!

FROM LANDS AFAR

I.

I do not crave one token from you, sweet:
I do not ask to touch your lips—your hand;
I cry not to the broad seas—“Let us meet!”
I know—I understand.

II.

I do not rave 'gainst heaven's or earth's decree—
The cross so bitter, and the stern command;
If love could come, your love would come to me:
I know—I understand.

III.

All gentle airs from heaven whisper sweet
Forever to you, over sea and land;
Dear silent lips that move not when we meet,
I know—I understand.

THE LAST VISION

You seek the dim room where I died—
 How orderly-serene it looks!
The dreamless pillows, side by side,
 The table, with the old, loved books.
No inkstand, littered leaves in view—
Last love songs that I sang to you.

The morning light streams in; the leaves
 Lean to the windows as of old,
And every ray of light receives
 New glory from your locks of gold.
But one lies on the dreamer's breast,
With farewell, dying kisses blest.

For Death remembers Love, my dear
 Divided as the stars you see,
A flower for that remembrance wear—
 Even like the last you kissed for me.
Let not one dream of Love depart;
'Tis all of Heaven earth holds, Sweetheart.

Love's memory makes the dim room bright!
 Look from the windows to the blue
Of Heaven, and in the lone twilight
 God tells the stars to sing to you!
But can they sing a sweeter song
Than this; "I loved you all life long?"

TO A LITTLE ONE

I.

Dear little life I may not lead,
 To guard against the future's frown;
To help you make the dream the deed
 And bring your crosses to a crown;
Remember that the wish was there,
 Following your footsteps like a prayer.

II.

Dear little life beneath a sky
 Bright with Life's earliest morning-glow,
I can but turn to say "Goodbye,"
 And leave Love's blessings as I go.
Yours be the Heaven so cloudless-fair,
 And Love's still stars to lead you there.

JUST HOLLER OUT AMEN!

When trouble falls around you, an' the sky is
lookin' dim,
If you cannot feel like raisin' of a halleluia
hymn,
Just pull yourself together in the happy way—
an' then,
When the other feller sings it, you jes' holler
out, "Amen!"

It's hard to do, I reckon—with the mist around
your eyes,
An' not a star a-shinin' in the midnight of the
skies!
But—think: The light is somewhere, on the hills
of Life—an' then,
When the other feller's singin' you jes' holler
out, "Amen!"

Trouble jes' can't stand it—that halleluia song!
It ripples out a rainbow all the stormy way
along!
You listen to the music—if you cannot sing—
an' then,
Jes' thank some brother fer the tune, an' holler
out, "Amen!"

A HARD-HIT PHILOSOPHER

I.

The hurricane swept his house away,
 But he had no word of blame;
 The lightnin' burnt his barn next day,
 An' the old' blind mule went lame.
 But he never asked of the why or whence
 An' never railed ag'in Providence.

II.

He took the world as it came each day,
 An' let the weather drive;
 'Twuz good to be livin' anyway —
 Jes' to feel yourself alive!
 There's a song in the world for every sigh,
 An' you'll get to the green hills by an' by.

III.

That wuz the way he went along—
 Peaceful, day by day;
 If he couldn't sing the joyful song
 He hadn't a word to say.
 Let the hurricanes howl, an' the lightnin' fly,
 There's a rainbow a-runnin' around Life's sky!

WHEN DARK COMES DOWN

Little One, afraid

When the Dark comes down
And the train's at the station
Of Sleepy Town,
I would that the pillow
My head has pressed
Might bring me the blessing
Of a child's sweet rest!

The daylight fades;

Night brings you Sleep,
But I wake and weep, dear.
I wake and weep.

Little One, afraid,

You have naught to fear
From God and the Darkness
Round you there;
A dream enfolds you
From earth-alarms,
And I know you are sleeping
In Heaven's arms.

You have kissed Goodnight,—

God gives you Sleep,
But I wake and weep, dear,
I wake and weep.

THE NECKLACE

Roses near a garden gate,
Footsteps in the twilight late
Where no other joys I see
Than two arms that necklace me.
Nothing more I ask of heaven
Than these arms which Love hath given.
Fairer necklace could there be
Than the arms that necklace me?

They are dimpled, sweet and fair,
With the rose-tint blooming there;
Love and joy, and peace profound
Bless me when they're clasped around.
Could an angel's necklace be
Fairer than these arms to me?

Sure, I miss them all the day,
Toiling on the weary way,—
Miss the tender clasp and touch,
Of the arms I love so much!
Of the arms in Love once given—
Child-arms, holding us near heaven.

WINTER FRIENDS

I.

Fellow's feeling thankful for the winter, when
he knows
A brighter place than yonder—where the
honeysuckle grows;
Sweet rest and contentment in a fire-lighted
nook
Where he puffs the real tobacco—falls to
dreaming o'er a book.

II.

Sure, he isn't friendless as each glowing page he
turns:
On such a night some Inn of old has sheltered
Bobby Burns;
The snow without, in ghostly sheets, but never
night seemed long
When the glasses on the sideboard rang with his
mirth and song!

III.

How from a book's old pages an old friend
greets your sight!
"I've had my day," he tells you, "and I've come
to have my night!"
No phantom he—as living you seem to see his
face;
He takes another rocker by the roaring
fireplace!

IV.

So a fellow's feeling thankful for the winter, for
it leads ,

To restful nooks and friendly books of olden
dreams and deeds.

O rare old summer gardens! Too sweet ye were
to stay,

But I've a winter-corner where I dream the
night away!

A NEW TIME CONVERSION

To the sweet old woman I says, says I,
As we glimpsed the great world speedin' by,
Like two old children holdin' hands
In the strange, new dawn o' the later lands—
"We've lived for to see the airships fly
An' dart like swallows around the sky—
The lightnin' runnin' the railroad cars
An' the 'lectric lights outshine the stars;
An' this is the thought that's creepin' nigh:
It's time fer the old 'uns to say good-bye
An' put in a claim fer their crowns on high.
The world's too fast, or we're too slow—
Come on, old woman—it's time to go!"

An' what do you reckon she says? Says she:
"We're here fer to see what's here to see
In the world where the Lord would have us be—
A world like a stirred-up circus town,
An' the show ain't out till the curtain's down.
Till the last faint flicker o' life is gone
We two'll shout 'Glory,' and press right on!"

An' on we went in the whirlin' race,
Gray guests of Life by the Lord's good grace;
On the place o' the New Time music chancin'
We saw the ghosts of the Old Men—dancin'!
An' the dance they were doin', high an' low,
Warn't with the sweethearts of Long Ago—
Them fellers whose thin hair shone like snow!

Them Old Time candidates for the sky
That had read their titles in days gone by
With the New Time women were hoppin' high!
Or, nimble still to the music's soun',
Were swingin' the rosy gals aroun'!
An' to the old woman I says, says I:
“Their creakin' bones'll break bimeby!
If them's the sights o' the new world-show
Come on, old woman,—it's time to go!”

An' what do you reckon she says? Says she:
“It's a-many a year since you danced with me;
Time was that you went it—toe an' heel
An' the world went 'roun' in the old-time reel;
When we shook the shingles on the shed
An' danced the sleepy stars to bed.
Each gray old oak has a fresh, green bough—
An' I wonder if dancin' is in you now?”

The Lord'll fergive me, you must allow . . .
It warn't no fault o' mine—nohow,
But some o' them stopped their dance to say:
“Look at that feller, old an' gray—
Half a mile from the Jedgment Day,
Live as a cricket! I'll be boun'
He's swingin' the old-time gal aroun'!”

A GOODNIGHT

Goodnight, little Curly Head,
 Folded in the Dreams of Night
Since the evening prayer you said
 Went to Heaven on wings of Light.

Pillowed on your snowy bed
 Like a gold-crowned angel bright,
Flower-wreathed Dreams to slumber led
 Bless you, little one Goodnight!

HIS COMFORTER

I.

He just ain't got no mother,
In a land where mothers be,
But he knows my heart's own pathway,
An' he snuggles up to me.

II.

When the dreary rain is fallin',
An' no light in heaven we see—
When he's missin' of his mother,
Then he snuggles up to me.

III.

An' his arms are locked around me,
An' a man's tears—fallin' free,
Tell him Love's sweetest story
When he snuggles up to me!

AN UP AND DOWN BELIEVER

I'm a up an' down believer—never had a bit o' doubt,

Or tried to take the gospel an' turn it wrong-side out.

I never ax no questions, or feel like faith'll fail:

I'm han' an' han' with Jonah an' on good terms with the whale.

I'm a up an' down believer—fer they raised me that away,—

Had family prayers fer breakfast an' dinner ever' day!

'Coz Solomon had all them wives, I never do condemn;

Though I will admit I wonder how he got along with them.

It don't hurt me that Job had boils, an' axed fer his release;

I kin bear his great afflictions with the perfectest o' peace!

An' as fer Joshua keepin' of the sun this side the line—

He knowed what he wuz doin', an' it's no affair o' mine!

I allus take the gospel as I fin' it—low an' high;
I never has no quarrel with the workin's o'
the sky.

Fer what am I? A creetur that is mighty weak
an' small;

So, I jest strike han's with Jonah, an' I
swallers whale an' all!

LOVE IN NEED

When thou shalt need me send my soul some
word, —

Let but a sigh drift from thy life to mine
And like the light my love to thee will
shine,

My soul soar to thee like a singing bird!
And sweeter songs than Grief hath ever heard
Will I sing to thee, while I kneel and twine
With thornless roses that dear brow of
thine,

My love thy shelter, by no storm-winds stirred.

Yes, when thou need'st me speak, and I shall
hear

Though oceans roll between: Some sense
of thee

Shall make the light a message: I shall
mark

A meaning in the shadows and draw near;

And thou shalt know, wherever thou may'st
be,

My step, and feel my warm clasp in the
dark!

TO A DEPARTING ONE

I.

There was a time when Home seemed sweet
And made for me the world's heart beat;
When, with the tasks of Day well done,
Home looked to me like Victory won!
I knew that there one face would wait
With welcome at a loved home-gate.

II.

How will it be, when you are gone,
And not a rose to greet the dawn
And smile into the dreaming-eyes
That made the blue in sad, gray skies?
When lost and lonely, I shall wait
For welcome at the old home-gate?

III.

But Memory there will stand, my dear,
And Life Love's necklace still will wear;
And though Life never drowns the sigh
Which means "Good Morning" and "Good-bye,"
This will remain, like God's own grace:—
The kiss left on a Father's face.

THE PHANTOM DANCE

The great-grandfather, from the wall,
 Amazed was looking down
Where the dancers gray, in the music's thrall,
(O, they're never a-growing old at all!)
 Dance the Dark from Pleasure Town.

And last midnight, when the guests were gone
And stars were dreaming of death at dawn,—
When the house was still, and I seemed to know
Its guests were ghosts of the Long Ago,
I looked from the dreamy old armchair
And talked with the great-grandfather there.

And he said: "What world is this world so new
 Where stranger life-tides flow?
What scenes are these that pass in view?
Is it the world that I left with you
 A hundred years ago?

"O, there's never a chimney-corner place
Where gray Time shows his wrinkled face,
 And I haven't heard, for a century's round,
'Hark! From the Tombs a doleful Sound!'
Rest of the righteous! Souls of the just!
The graybeards dance o'er my dead world's
 dust!

For I glimpse the locks that are gray as mine
 A-glimmer in the maze
 Of a dance my dreams may not divine:
 I never knew old eyes to shine
 So bright, in my dancing days!

My old earth, whirling in space afar,
 Clashed, I know, with a stormy star;
 New Time was born and change was wrought
 In the flash of the lightning of a Thought;
 And now, in the strength of the New ye trust
 And dance for joy o'er my dead world's dust!"

So spake the great-grandfather—he
 Of the picture on the wall,
 And lo—of a sudden a mystery!—
 Music echoing far and free
 While phantoms thronged the hall.

And down from the ancient, carven frame
 The ghost of the great-grandfather came,
 And it said to a grizzled ghost: "Old boy,
 We'll have a round in this world of joy!
 We died too young and far away,
 Sentenced to sleep till Judgment Day!"
 And when I left them (The Shadows know!)
 They were dancing the one-step, high and low,
 With the girls of a hundred years ago!

THE SHOUTIN' CHANCE

I like it when campmeetin' time is comin' round
about,

For then the old-time brothers get a livin'
chance to shout!

The old-time religion—it sorter acts that way:
The halleluia in your soul must have its shouting
day!

For you get the invitation—

An' glad to hear it, too:

“Rise up an' tell us, brother,

What the Lord has done for you!”

You see, campmeetin's hearty-like at every time
an' place;

It's jes' as sociable an' free as sweet “Amazin'
Grace.”

Then you hear the mighty “Amen” to some
brother's ringin' prayer,

An' it wouldn't be surprisin' if the Lord Himself
was there!

Up, the music rises,

Light breaks through shadows dim;

An' you feel your soul a-goin'

To heaven, in a hymn!

To the wanderers, worn an' weary, who in the
 darkness roam,
 Campmeetin' time, I tell you, is the time for
 comin' Home!
 An' Home's right there to meet 'em, an' takes
 'em by the hand,—
 They're only jes' outside the gates of Love's
 own Promised Land.

Then, when they rise an' tell 'em
 They're glad they're Home once more,
 The old campmeetin' shoutin'
 Shakes the high celestial floor!

TRADIN' THE OLD PIANNER

I.

Thar's trouble in the househol'—an' it's powerful sad we feel;
The ol' pianner's goin' in a trade for a automobile;
The pianner that we danced by in the ol' Virginny Reel,—
Music fer heartless money an' the stylish automobile!

II.

We've had it twenty year now—been ours through time an' chance, —
Swung the gals to its music, 'round in the dizzy dance;
Shared honors with the fiddle, an' gave the music true;
That ol' pianner's playin' wuz joy to the soul o' you!

III.

You think that I would give it—the comfort that it brings—
Fer the "Honk, honk, honk—look out thar!" of one o' them auto things
Flyin' across the country—breakin' our rest an' rules;
Not only killin' the quiet, but millionaires an' mules?

IV.

The sweet ol' gals played on it songs o' the Long
Ago.

(The wonder is we heard 'em—our hearts were
a-beatin' so!)

It's only jest a relic, but a love for it we feel;
Even now it beats the music of the honk-honk
automobile.

V.

The house'll go fer a mortgage, an' the stock'll
foller; too;

An' all to ride in a auto thing, whizzin' the
country through!

An' I reckon we'll all be lucky—that is the way
we feel—

If we have the ghost of a shelter, an' a shed fer
the automobile!

TO A FRIEND

I.

If you should go, and I should stay,
You would not ever seem away:
The stars shine far, but you would be
A presence in their Light to me;
And not a dawn but I would say:
"He bids 'Good Morning' here today."

II.

If you should go—O faithful friend!
Sad were my journey to the end;
For me no more the Comfort-place—
Beat of your heart; light of your face
Yet every morn that Heaven might send
Would say: "God gives you back your friend."

“NEARER TO THEE”

They were singing, sweetly singing,
And the song melodiously
On the evening air was ringing:
“Nearer my God to Thee!”

In my eyes the tear-drops glistened
As it starred the twilight dim,
And I wondered as I listened
If it brought them nearer Him?

Were they like the wanderer weary,
Song and Life in sweet accord;
Resting in the darkness dreary
In the nearness of the Lord?

Had His spirit ever sought them
To be slighted or denied?
Had that dear song ever brought them
Closer to the Savior's side?

I have heard its music often,
Felt its meaning deep and sweet;
And my weary heart would soften
Singing at my Master's feet;

“Nearer Thee”—oh, precious feeling!
Nearer Thee in gain and loss;
Nearer Thee when I am kneeling
In the shadow of Thy cross!

THE LESSON OF THE BIRDS

I.

I sometimes think, when sorrow makes a fellow
sorter moan,
Of the birds that keep a-singin' just like trouble
was unknown!
I make no doubt they have their grief—as bitter
as the rest,
And yet they sing their sweetest songs above
an empty nest!

II.

That mockingbird there, in the blooms, is
making holiday,
Yet vandal hands have wrecked its home,—
have stolen its young away;
That little lodge of straw is mute, where chirped
its tender brood,
Yet how it sends its song to God—and life a
solitude!

III.

But just let trouble come along, and human
hearts they sigh,
And send their wailing messages a-ringing to
the sky!
The world is then no friend to grace—a shadow
dims the light,
The stars shine through a storm of tears, and
phantoms fill the night!

IV.

For all our souls, heaven-gifted—for all our
human words,
We read life's sweetest lesson in the music of
the birds!
And the kind God gives that lesson, when skies
above us frown,
To leave the moaning to the winds and sing the
sorrow down!

JUST A PLAIN OLD-FASHIONED WOMAN

I.

I'm a plain, old-fashioned woman from the
springtime to the fall;
Six little fellows call me "Mother"—bless 'em
all!
Tuggin' at my apron-strings, in kitchen an' in
hall,
Sweet as the roses o' the springtime!

II.

Just a plain, old-fashioned woman, never
wantin' for to roam
From the plain old-fashioned meadow for Life's
sweeter honey-comb;
The patterin' of little feet—it keeps my heart at
home
With these sweet little roses o' the
springtime.

III.

Just a plain, old-fashioned woman, like our
mothers used to be:
All I know of heaven in a child's bright eyes I
see.
An' the earth is all the brighter because they're
lovin' me—
Sweet with these roses of Love's spring-
time.

IV.

But one comes with the twilight, where I watch
 an' wait, an' then
The arms the world took from me are 'round
 their own again;
An' I know old-fashioned mothers were the
 mothers of God's Men!
 (Here's a rose for you, dearie, from Love's
 springtime!)

AT THE PLACE

I.

All night long, where the slain man slept,
In dreams the slayer his vigil kept.

II.

Even when the ghost-gray moon went dead
He stood at the foot, and he stood at the head;

III.

Wondering ever how deep—how deep,
Dreaming, or dreamless, was his sleep?

IV.

And a wind-blown leaf that fell that way
Seemed loud as the trumpet of Judgment Day.

V.

And the living covered his weeping face,
That he could not take the dead man's place.

VI.

How dark forever the paths to be trod
With that one grave 'twixt himself and God!

WHEN A FELLER IS GOIN' AWAY

I.

The skies may seem blue, but they're misty
An' dark, with the sunniest ray,
When you're sayin' goodbye
With a tear in your eye—
When a feller is goin' away.

II.

There's never no stars in the night-time;
There's never no sun in the day,
When you're sayin' goodbye,
With the tear and the sigh—
When a feller is goin' away.

III.

For you dunno what's there—in the future,
If the skies'll be blue or be gray,
An' that's why he sighs,
With the mist in his eyes—
The feller that's goin' away!

GROWIN' TO A MAN

I.

Don't call him now de sweetes'
Li'l' feller in de lan';
He done lef' off his aperns—
He growin' to a man!

II.

He thinkin' 'bout de big worl'—
An' how he plot an' plan!
Soon reach his mammy's shoulder—
He growin' to a man!

III.

But he ain't fergot his raisin',
True feller, heart an' han'!
An' his mammy's still his sweatheart
Though he's growin' to a man!

“GOD KEEP THY LIFE”

I.

Thy little feet know not the way to go,
And thorns may wound them in a world of
 strife;
I can but pray—because I love you so:
 “God keep thy life!”

II.

For looking backward on the vanished years,
I see my stumbling feet where earth was
 rife
With daggers; and I pray, while fall my tears,
 “God keep thy life!”

III.

For I have known the bitterness of loss,
And oft have fallen in the strife.
Thou, too, must suffer—thou must bear thy
 cross:
 “God keep thy life!”

THE OLD-TIME GOSPEL

I.

I get no consolation where the high-flown
preachers roam;
I want 'em to bang the pulpit an' drive the
gospel home!
No theories conflictin'—nothin' but Bible-proof,
Jes' come down with the gospel till the "Amens"
shake the roof!

II.

To tell the old-time story in the wonderful,
old-time way
That don't stop for the picnic when it starts for
Judgment day;
Pointin' the paths o' pleasantness—since many
there are in sight—
Yet layin' the law down, people,—tellin' the
story right.

III.

I've heard a old-time brother, with the heaven-
light on his brow,
Say, when he heard such preachin, "Brother,
you're talkin' NOW!"
As the sure, sweet word come ringin' I couldn't
but wonder then
If the angels, 'way up yonder, didn't hear the
high "Amen!"

IV.

The riches the world is needin' ain't all in gold
and lands;
They're higher than that, I tell you, in "a House
not made with hands,
Eternal, in the heavens!" There lies the old-time
way,
To the "sweet fields of Eden," where the gates
swing wide today.

CONSOLATION

Hoping for the best,
While in the dark we're groping,
And if it never comes at all—
Had a good time hoping.

THE COUNTRY

The country's smilin' all around,
So, what's the use to fret?
Think of the joy that you have found,
And the joy that's comin' yet!

Let's thankful be for strength and grace
New labors to begin:
A little life—a little space
Just to be happy in!

For faith that points to realms above
The sinning and forgiven,
And, sweetest still, for human love
That makes the world a heaven!

LOVE AND MEMORY

I.

How strange it is when Love with Memory
meets!

Life knows diviner grace:

A vision of a face in city streets—

An unforgotten face.

II

Her's were the eyes that made the morning
bright,

And her's the voice that knew

To lead a life to litanies of Light

Till dreams of Heaven came true.

III.

There, in the throng, that face—even as of
old,—

The eyes of amethyst!

The dear brow clustered with the locks of
gold—

The tresses Love has kissed.

IV.

And love, with lips forevermore made dumb,

An unknown traveler seems,

Journeying alone until a day shall come,

Sweet-whispering: “Read Love’s dreams!”

OL' MAN, SLEEP

I.

Ol' Man, Sleep—

He come, an' he say:
"Hit's a mighty long time
To de breakin' o' de day,
An' how come you wakeful
W'en I comes yo' way
An' tells you to sleep off yo' sorrer?"

II.

An' what does I tell him?—

"De res' time's nigh,
But my sorrer—my sorrer,
He never say 'Good-bye;'
He inside an' outside,
Whar de Night Win' cry,
An' how kin I sleep off my sorrer?"

III.

Ol' Man, Sleep,—

De bird is in de nes'
Time de Sun is yonder
At de red room o' de Wes',
But my sorrer, my sorrer,
You can't put him to res',
So how kin I sleep off my sorrer?

THE WISTFUL BROTHER

Dey ain't no use in sighin' kaze you went de way
er sin,

Yit you wish it hadn't been—

Oh, you wish it hadn't been!

Dey wuz nuthin' on dat highway dat wuz worth
de work ter win—

Oh, you wish it hadn't been—

Hadn't been!

Dey ain't no use in sighin' kaze ol' Satan took
you in,

Yit you wish it hadn't been—

Oh, you wish it hadn't been!

Dey warn't a prize he give you dat wuz worth
a chance ter win—

Oh, you wish it hadn't been—

Hadn't been!

But, brighten up yo' armor—though yo'
chance is mighty thin,

Since you wish it hadn't been—

Since you wish it hadn't been;

It may be dat you'll make it, an' de Lawd'll take
you in,

Since you wish it hadn't been—

Hadn't been!

THE LOVED AND LOST

So many hearts that are loving—so many loves
to be,
I wonder, sometimes, when I need you, if you
would come to me?
When I dream in the dark, and want you, as
the river wants the sea,
I wonder a dream of day's gone by don't lead
your steps to me?

II.

The day dawns gray and lonesome, and then,
when the night comes down,
I want you where my heart is—in the gloom of
Trouble Town:
If you could only come to me and say the old,
sweet words,
Winter would thrill with the music of the
Springtime mockingbirds.

III.

Love wants its own forever: The world, so sweet
and bright,
Is lost without your red lips—your eyes, that
made its light:
And so it is, I journey, from all the world apart,
Still wondering if you love me, Sweetheart!
Sweetheart! Sweetheart!

HEART, WE HAVE DREAMED OUR DREAM

I.

Dim be the way or splendid
With the morning's cloudless beam,
Still, when the journey's ended,
Heart, we have dreamed our dream'

II.

Pass like a still, deep river,
Or go in a glory-gleam,
The dream to the Great Dream-Giver—
Heart, we have dreamed our dream!

III.

And the ways of Life forsaking
Where joys but phantoms seem,
Still sleep—or a wondrous waking,
Heart, we have dreamed our dream!

PLAYIN' IN THE RAIN

De ol' folks keeps de corner,
An' all de time complain:
But, bless de Lawd! dem chillun
Jes' playin' in de rain!

I reckon dat de ol' folks—
Dey sorter thinkin' strong
Of how de rain fall on de graves
Dat waitin' fer 'em long.

Outside hit look so lonesome
Hit make 'em think o' that —
How all de world fergit 'em,
An' lef' 'em whar dey at!

Hit's den you hear 'em saying—
W'en come de rainy day,
“Dey ain't no room fer ol' folks:
Dey all time in de way!”

An' so, day keeps de corner,
An' all de time complain,
But, bless de Lawd! dem chillun,
Jes' playin' in de rain!

AT WEST VIEW

The twilight here so perfect is and stilly—
Life's storms and discords cease;
The red rose holds the sunset, but the lily
Droops in a dream of peace.

The birds that hailed the Morning in its splendor
Come with the darkening day,
Not with the heartbreak of a song, but tender,
They charm the dark away.

The hands that once were so love-sweet for
holding,
On an unanswering breast
Shadows on shadows of the Night are folding
Over the Rose of Rest.

What does the Dark care for the love of
woman?—
It slays, and never saves!
And lo! around lost mothers, Grief, still human,
Rains tears on little graves.

Summer wanes far, and soon Life's winters
dreary
Will still shed one bright gleam,
And when they whisper sweet rest to the weary
Here will Love read its dream.

TOGETHER

A SONG OF LOVE'S TOILERS

We toiled in barren fields of life,
 In spring and winter weather;
In all the storm, in all the strife,
 Together—still together,
But even the dark was glorified,
 Facing the shadows, side by side.

Though sorrow came to drown the song
 And sweet Joy slipped his tether,
Still hand-in-hand we walked along
 Together—still together,
And Love was there when Hope had died,
 And Love still found us side by side.

Ever by Love supremely led
 In all life's stormy weather,
Even by the green graves of our dead
 Together—still together,
And sorrow still is sanctified
 Facing God's future side by side.

THE CANDID BROTHER

Ain't worried—not a little—
 'Bout the evolution plan,
 Ef the man made the monkey
 Or the monkey made the man.
 The biggest sort o' problem
 I ever have in view
 Is the world where I'm a-livin'
 An' the chance o' pullin' through.

When I try to run the weather
 The trial's all in vain;
 Ain't in it with the raincrow
 When he's ready for the rain;
 An' as to prohpesyin',
 You can't on me depend:
 Ef I said: "World ends tomorrow,"
 Bless yer soul, 'twould never end!

This life's a cross-word puzzle
 From flowerin' spring to fall,
 An' long before you've solved it
 It's—"Good-bye to you all!"
 It's just a world o' problems,
 An' the best that I can do
 Is to thank the Lord I'm livin',
 With a chance for pullin' through.

THE BILLVILLE FOOTBALL TEAM

I.

They talk about war in furrin parts, where the
battle-bullets scream;
They ain't got nothin' on us—on the Billville
Football Team.
We organized the team last week an' rushed
into the fray
With a halleluia shoutin' an' a old-time "Hip-
hooray!"

II.

You see, that game was new to us; a feller, he
came 'long
An' said he'd set us so fur right we never could
go wrong;
He told us all 'bout "kickin' goals," "receivin'
punts," an' sich.
But when we got into the game no man knowed
which from which.

III.

The city council, it adjourned; the mayor got in
the game;
The sheriff said he'd prove himself a wind that
sweeps a flame!
The leadin' statesman o' the town, he 'lowed
he'd take a hand;
The undertaker said, to him it looked like
Promised Land.

IV.

We wasn't no time at it 'fore trouble come in
sight
As they went around the left end an' smashed
into the right;
The man mixed up his signals—the Lord knows
how, or why;
The mayor, he tried to kick a goal an' kicked
himself sky-high!

V.

The sheriff, he got rattled—he floundered all
about;
They laid him up for quick repairs an' had to
take Him out;
This way an' that way the runnin' water-boy;
Excitement was on tiptoe while the bleachers
yelled with joy.

VI.

I tell you 'twas a mixup—you never seen the
like;
'Twas lightnin' that had lost its way an' knowed
not where to strike!
That it was war in earnest there wasn't any
doubt;
They left off playin' football to knock each
other out.

VII.

You talk o' "huntin' trouble" they found it there
that day;
It seemed jes' like a hurricane had come the
Billville way;
They went as lively to it as savage fightin'
bands,
While the hopeful undertaker was a-clappin'
of his hands.

VIII.

'Twas a time for "Look out, fellers! Each chap
for himself!"
The mayor is now a-limpin' 'round; the sheriff's
on the shelf;
It's a crippled, sad community; there's trouble
high an' low,
An' the doctor's praisin' of the Lord from whom
all blessin's flow!

IX.

So I say that war in furrin lands jes' now seems
mighty tame;
It ain't got nothin' on us who were in that
football game;
We'd ruther risk the battlefields where flyin'
bullets scream
Than tackle Old Man Trouble in the Billville
Football Team.

CONTENT

I.

Ain't a-cravin' for the things
Far away from sight;
Well content, I thank the Lord
For just a little light.
For the toilin' of the daytime—
The sweet rest of the night.

II.

Ain't a-finding fault with things;
Well content to know
He is blest who does his best,
Faithful here below;
That above the thorns of life
Sweetest roses grow.

III.

So it is I find the way,
Though the night is long;
Sight the harbor from afar,
Though the tide be strong;
Darkness dies, and earth is sweet
With the morning song.

THE RADIO GOSSIP

(As the Old Time Brother Sees It)

I'm tellin' my ol' woman: "Time's a-gettin' over
ground;

The radio is workin' an' repeatin' every sound,
An' you'd best be keerful how you order me
around,—

It's tellin' things, promiscuous, to the
neighbors!

It tells the songs we sing

In the halleluia ring!

It's a give-away in winter

An' a gossip in the spring.

You kin hear the Sunday sermon whilst you're
lyin' in bed

An' the lonesome rain's a-singin' of a sleep-song
on the shed;

When the preacher's tellin' sinners 'bout the
brimstone, burnin' red—

O it's tellin' all our troubles to the
neighbors!

We'll have to watch and pray

In the dark an' in the day,—

That radio contraption

Is a-givin' things away!"

Then my wise ol' woman answers: "I've done
 heered it goin' by,
An' you'd better watch yer own step 'twixt this
 country an' the sky,
When you storm to shake the shingles—when
 you raise the roof on high,
For it's tellin' all yer doin's to the
 neighbors!"

That settles me, I'll say!
Makes the blue sky turn to gray,
 An' I've got a quick engagement
'Bout a mile or two away!

A TIME PHILOSOPHER

I.

"It's well old Time won't stop," I say,
Or he might bring to view
The world o' time I throwed away—
The tasks I didn't do!
What would a fellow's sentence be
If Time asked things of you and me?

II.

We let the Get-There Engine pass,
Although we heard her hum:
We let the grass grow in the crop
The day the picnic come.
Quick on the big road we were bound
To where we'd swing the sweet girl's 'round!

III.

I say: "It's better as it is—
For Time to keep right on:
Don't try to block that way o' his:
He's got you with what's gone!"
What in the roun' worl' would you do
If Time went over books with you?

THE OLD FRIENDS

I.

The comfort you desire
Far from the busy throng;
Old friends that share your fire
When winter nights are long.

II.

They come from olden places
Of ever-changing skies,
The glow in all their faces,
The love light in their eyes.

III.

The friends that fail us never,
All other friends above,
The light that shines forever—
Bright from the books we love!

THE CHEERING WORD

Honey, don't you worry
 "Bout de trouble what's in sight;
De sweet word fer you
 Is: " 'Twill all come right!"
De sunshine is a-travelin'
 To the shadders er de night,
But de stars is shinin' welcome:
 "It'll all come right!"

WE'LL JUST SLEEP ON THE FLOOR

Our relatives is the bestest folks you ever seen
or knowed;

Makes themselves as sociable as rabbits in the
road;

When we tell 'em that the house is full up to the
door,

An' ain't no room for 'em, they say: "We'll jest
sleep on the floor!"

Had the Lee unveilin', with speakin', crowds an'
all,

An' here they come from Williamstown an'
Huckleberry Hall;

An' ma, she told 'em warn't no place at home
fer any more;

But, pshaw! they just stayed 'round, an' said:
"We'll all sleep on the floor!"

Ain't seen no folks as sociable as they is: Eat an'
eat,

An' tell you that the milk ain't sour an' vinegar
is sweet!

An' dad says if they went to heaven an' jest
squeezed in the door

An' couldn't get no seats, they'd say:
"We'll jest set on the floor!"

THE LIFE-LESSONS

I.

It's Oh, for the sigh and the falling tear;
You are learning the lessons of life, my dear;
And there will be sighs and rain-dimmed eyes—
Storm and stars in the changing skies;
But a flower is born for the flower that dies—
 These are the lessons of life, my dear.

II.

It's Oh, for the wreath for the brows to wear!
But the thorns will lurk in its leaves, my dear;
There will be shadow for all the light:
But a steadfast star in the stormy night
Will gild the gloom till the morning bright:
 These are the lessons of life, my dear.

III.

Look to the Morning—a world made new,
Reading your beautiful dreams for you!
Thankful for life and the beauty of Spring,
Not to a cross should your dear arms cling
While a bird in the blooms has the heart to
 sing—
 These are the lessons of life, my dear.

A SONG OF THE WORLD

I.

Lookin' mighty lonesome
On the road that's long an' rough,
But I reckon that we'll get there
If we just have time enough.

II.

Lots more thorns than roses
The old world has to give,
But spite o' all the trouble
It's mighty sweet to live!

III.

To know that you are livin'
In a worl', 'neath skies o' blue,
That does as well, I reckon,
As the Lord would have it do!

IV.

Time an' tide—we'll make 'em
Do all things as we will!
Right or wrong—this old world
Rolls close to heaven still.

FOR A PLACE OF PEACE

O, that the years had been lived in quiet,
O, that the Past were a place of Peace!
But here, my dear, let the fancy riot—
Soon comes the Shadow, when Life shall
cease!

O, that we never had supped with Sorrow—
Dwelt in the ashes of bitter years!
We live Today and we lose Tomorrow—
Soon comes the Shadow that hides all
tears!

What do they know in the paths of Duty,
Of the souls that joyed and the hearts that
bled?
Soon comes the Silence that chills all beauty—
Soon comes the Dark where the dreams fall
dead!

You are my own—still; and God is above you:
He sways the life-tides as tides of the sea:
All that I knew of His heaven was—to love you:
Love has made earth sweet as heaven to
me!

Come home, come home, my dearie,
For the starlight streams in vain,
And never a rose will bloom—God knows—
Till you walk love's way again.

THE SWEET LITTLE WOMAN

I.

The sweet little woman—
 She knows your every care;
She's in the Evening doorway
 And lights the darkness there.
And far you see a twinkling hearth
And know a little woman's worth.

II.

The sweet little woman—
 When day's long toil is o'er
You say, with Love and longing—
 “The Heart of Home once more!”
For all the world lives in that place—
Love and a little woman's face.

A MEMORY

I sit alone in my room tonight
And think of her dear, sweet face,
Here, where I miss the tender light
Of her loveliness and grace.

I read her letters over again—
The letters she wrote last year;
The faded flowers in the folds remain
As her dear hand left them there.

Little she thought, when these flowers she
pressed—
For one that adored her so,
They'd be but memories over her breast
And she in the dark below!

But the beat of her holy heart was stilled
Ere the depths of it could speak,
And the Angel Death, in his anger, chilled
The Rose of Life on her cheek.

Dear, we shall meet, when the years are past—
Under the dawn and dew,
And light will break in my life at last
When I dream in the dust with you.

LI'L' CHRISTMAS CHILLUNS

Li'l' Christmas chilluns
 Happy on de way,
 Countin' of de minutes
 To de Christmas Day;
 Santy Claus can't miss 'em—
 Watchin' day an' night;
 Done told him whar dey livin'
 An' he got de message right!

Hi, li'l' chilluns!
 Santy Claus'll know
 Whar you all a-livin'
 Kaze he lovin' of you so!

Li'l' Christmas chilluns,
 How, an' howdy do!
 Santy Claus is savin'
 De finest things for you!
 He knows dat you been waitin'
 Thoo de year so long,
 To hear de reindeer runnin',—
 To sing de Christmas song!

Sweet li'l' chilluns!
 Santy Claus'll know
 Whar you all a-livin'
 Kaze he lovin' of you so!

ALL ALONG THE HIGHWAY

All along the highway,
 Past many a golden lane,
An' I would that I could travel
 The old road again,—
Feel the freshness of a flower,
 Beat down with the rain
In the beauty of the morning
 On the old road again.

II.

All along the highway —
 Fields of golden grain,
But to hear the old-time singing
 I listen all in vain,
And a Voice comes o'er the meadows—
 The valley and the plain:
"There is no hand to hold now
 On the old road again."

FOR A LITTLE WOMAN'S SAKE

I.

Your roses miss you, dearie,
That have no hearts to break;
Your world of love is weary
For a little woman's sake.

II.

And “Come!” sings the Morning,
And “Hasten!” calls the night,
“And rest you on Love's bosom
In blessedness of light!”

III.

And there's a lonely lover
Whose lips no song can make
Save one—that leaves him sighing
For a little woman's sake.

ALONG THE WAY

I.

Too steep the hill—too heavy is the cross,
 Too dark the thorny way:
Too bitter, dear, the thought that love is loss—
 A fading flower of May.

II.

But I would face the future without fear,
 With not one star in view,
Did God but grant my willing heart to bear
 Life's woes and wounds for you!

WHERE THE WAYS END

What is the sorrow? A little space—
The cry of the fallen in the race;
The dying cry which the world heeds not,
Ill remembered, or soon forgot.
Joy or sorrow will end in rest—
Dust, and a rose on a dreamless breast.

What is the sighing? It is not long;
One in the end are the sigh and song,
One in faith, and one in doubt—
The cry of the vanquished—the victor's shout;
Victor and vanquished must creep for rest
Where the dust is blown o'er the dreamless
breast.

And what, in the transient gloom and glow,
Is the beautiful love that we cling to so,
The rose-red lip, and the sparkling eye?
A gracious greeting—a sad good-bye!
With pallid faces and lips grief-prest,
The lovers creep to the rose for rest.

So we smile at the dark on the pathway rough:
There shall be sunshine and rest enough,
After the stormy ways are past,
Rest shall be sweeter at last—at last!
Joy and sorrow will end in rest —
Dust, and a rose on a dreamless breast.

A HYMN ON THE ROAD

I.

De Word come down
Fum de Halleluia Place:
"It's all in de way
Dat you runnin' of de race;
It ain't de trouble
Dat you had on de road—
It's all in de way
You wuz totin' of yo' load!"

II.

An' you better see 'bout it—
De one an' de all,
Fer it's high fer ter climb,
An' it's mighty fur ter fall;
No use countin'
Of de troubles what you knowed,
Fer it's all in de way
You wuz totin' of yo' load!

HIS HOLIDAY TROUBLES

I know old Santy Claus—he stays
 Right 'round the house 'fore holidays,
 And he's as watchful as a cat
 To see what little boys are at;
 And I'm so good that when they say
 It's time to dream the night away,
 I'm 'fraid, before my sleep I take,
 I'll be a angel when I wake!

THE WAY OF LOVE

I.

Whate'er the sky above you—
With stars or storms replete,
A little way to love you
And thankful for it, sweet!

II.

Thankful in joy or sorrow
In depths—on heights above;
A beautiful tomorrow
The promise of your love!

III.

A little way—or far away
But steadfast still and true
Each path, dear, is a star way
That leads my life to you'

WITH CLASP OF HANDS

So that I feel your hand in mine
 The darkest night with light shall shine;
 The wintry way shall lead to May;
 Answered shall be the prayers I pray
 If only, dear, in dark or shine,
 I feel your hand in mine.

II.

For what in earth or heaven above
 Is stronger in the strength of love
 Than that sweet, tender clasp divine
 Of your dear, faithful hand in mine!
 Light! Light! for all the shadowed night
 And glimpses of the morning bright
 Where silver suns all cloudless shine,
 With your dear hand in mine—in mine!

WHEN IT'S NIGHT

When it's Night in chimney corners
Where the shadows flicker so,
Then the old folks are a-telling
Of the times of Long Ago,
And they say that then come *visitors*
No little children know.

It's then grandfather's dreamy,
And he looks 'round everywhere
And seems to see *somebody*
When there ain't nobody there . . .
We wonder why he puts his arm
Around an empty chair?

And when the Wind ain't whistling
'Round the windows any more
And the Fire talks to the shadows
That dance on wall and floor,
He just sits there and *listens*:
“*Is there someone at the door?*”

It's just the way of *old* folks,
And when children older grow,
We'll understand—they tell us—
Why they dream and *listen* so;
And we'll know about the *visitors*
No little children know.

THY VALENTINE

I.

What shall I send thee for thy Valentine?

All the dear love I treasure

I may not even by witchery confine

To one bright, brimming measure!

It taketh in the green land and the sea—

My love for thee, dear heart, my love for thee!

II.

What shall I send thee for thy Valentine?

I have no wreathes of glory—

No gems that may thy dear dark eyes
outshine—

Only this simple story:

Of all earth's joy there is but this for me—

My love for thee, dear heart, my love for thee!

III.

This, then, thy Valentine: A heart to beat

For thee each golden minute;

And one sweet song—one that is only sweet

Because thy name is in it!

This for thy necklace—if such grace may be—

My love for thee, dear heart, my love for thee!

"FROM NIGHT TO LIGHT"

The night was desolate; the wind wailed at my casement and stormed the stars from Heaven. Human Love had left me in the Valley of Despair, and no Raven in Life's wilderness flocked to feed my famished soul. I stretched forth empty hands to the upbraiding Dark, and bowed my head and wept. There was no balm in Gilead—no physicians there. But out of the Night, and storm, and darkness I heard, as in a dream, the Footsteps of God, and Heaven came nearer Earth, and Peace fell, like a benediction on my soul. An all-pervading Presence filled all space, and deep, and sweet beyond expression was a holy calm. Then came a vision of the Hill called Calvary, and from the Shadow of the Cross there streamed a Light that lit the way before me and made the darkness beautiful. I feared to speak, lest the Light should elude me; I feared to turn my eyes, lest the spell should be broken, with all its great, unutterable sweetness. But soft streamed the Light still, and the Valley of the Shadow of Death was not, and all the waves and the billows of Life sang Peace—even the Peace of God, which passeth understanding! And in that Light, far-shining from the Cross, I walk and walk forever. There is no Darkness now—no desolation; and surely Heaven shall not seem strange when at its gates I knock, for the glory of it is with me here, and Earth is beautiful and Life is Life, indeed.

AT THE LAST HOUR

The waving of the branches,
And the roses 'round the gate;
And a starred sky above them,
And love that comes too late.

The hills—the vales, sing “Welcome!”
The violets await
The tender winds that whisper
Of love that comes too late.

And oh! for solemn circumstance,
And oh, for iron Fate!
They weave a cruel crown of thorns
For Love that comes too late.

HIS OLD-TIME SONG

I.

Never dreams of riches—
Happiness his friend,
Singin' in the sunshine
To the furrow's end,—

“All that I want
In the whole creation,
Pretty little wife
An' a big plantation.”

II.

He sees no stocks, high-rising,
And doesn't hear 'em fall;
Just sings the old-time chorus
That tells his wants, and all—

“All that I want
In the whole creation,
Pretty little wife
An' a big plantation.”

THE AFTER TIME

There cometh a time for laughter,
And joy for the days and years,
But ever there cometh after,
A time and a place for tears.

II.

We weary of revel and riot
And—lost to all earthly strife,
God sends us the infinite quiet
Which strengthens the founts of Life.

III.

It is only when disenchanted
With joys that are bitter-sweet,
The soul which for rest has panted
Falls down at the Master's feet.

IV.

And ever, when Life seems lonely—
When Love at the best seems loss,
We cling to Him then—if only
For rest in the shade of the cross.

FAR FROM HOME

Still lookin' down the distance with the longin'
in her eyes,
An' I know that she's a-dreamin' of the light of
Georgy skies;
Dunno how to cheer her—dunno what to say,
But the heart of her I'm readin' when her eyes,
they look that way.

II.

"Ain't this here, too, God's country, a-smilin'
'round us so?
Are the roses any differ'nt from the ones we
used to know?
An' don't the birds make music?" But she says
—contrary one!—
"They ain't the Georgy mockin'birds a-singin'
in the sun!"

III.

How kin a feller prosper an' hive Life's honey-
comb
Here, in this newer country, when a woman's
heart's back home?
When she's allus dreamin'—dreamin' of the
fur-off vales an' hills,
The sunshine on the meadows, the lull-song of
the rills?

IV.

Forever an' forever—winter time an' May,
 The dear, bright, dreamin' eyes of her are
 turned the Georgy way;
 An' I reckon, 'fore I know it, we'll be packin'
 from this place,
 An' I'll see a Georgy mornin' a-smilin' in her
 face.

A BLESSING

Thanks for the bread of life,
 The shelter from whose shade we would
 not roam;
 The love of children and the sweetheart-wife
 Whose smile lights Home.
 The joy of simple pleasures, heaven-blest;
 And toil still faithful till the bell rings “Rest.”

ON THE HOME STRETCH

I.

I guess we'll make the landing—
 Though the ship rolls to an' fro;
The harbor lights are shinin',
 But the oil seem mighty low!
An' we dunno what awaits us
 Whether fire, or flood, or snow,
But we've got to keep a-goin' till we get there!

II.

I guess we'll find the country
 We've heard so much about,
But some will be too weary
 To clap their hands and shout;
And, once within its portals,
 They'll never turn us out,—
But we've got to keep a-goin' till we get there!

“YOU CAN’T PARK HERE”

You’ve got to keep a’goin’
Through this old world of care;
You’re in the race—
No restin’ place—
“You Can’t Park Here!”

II.

You’re on the way to Judgment Day
With titles dim or clear;
Can’t rest the load
Along the road—
“You Can’t Park Here!”

III.

Heaven grant that at the higher gates
Signs won’t be Everywhere
When Time is gone:
“Move on! Move on!
You Can’t Park Here!”

PO' OL' ADAM!

I.

Adam wuz his own boss
 'Twell he went ter sleep,
Den it wuz he los' a rib,
 An'—trouble in a heap!

II.

He riz up, he riz up—
 Fer dar he couldn't stay;
An' "Whar dat rib I had?" he said,—
 "I one rib short today!"

III.

Den Eve it wuz dat answered—
 An' skeered he wuz, fer sho'!
"I don't keer if you los' a rib,—
 You don't deserve no mo'!

IV.

"An' now I gwine ter tell you:
 Keep quiet ez a mouse,
Kaze I de very lady
 What runnin' of de house!

V.

“You got ter make de money—
 You got ter rise an’ shine;
Git up an’ eat yo’ breakfas’
 An’ go ’long whar you gwine!”

VI.

Adam ain’t say nuthin’:
 De talkin’ never cease:
“I’ll go dar, whar dem lions at
 Ter git my res’ an’ peace!”

VII.

You reckon he wuz peaceful?—
 Befo’ de day wuz gone
Eve made him split de kindlin’
 An’ put de kettle on.

VIII.

Adam—po’ ol’ Adam!
 Fum den ontill dis day
He had dis opinion:
 “I sleep my rights away!”

THE OBJECTIN' BROTHER

He wuz "The objectin' brother," an' they
 knowed him fur an' nigh;
Objected to the runnin' o' the roun' worl' an' the
 sky!
Warn't anything could please him in reason or
 in rhyme,
He wuz born fer jes' objectin'—fer objectin' all
 the time!

New bell fer the steeple—his objection come to
 that:
Give the parson a new beaver—didn't like the
 style o' hat!
Lightnin' rod, fer safety;—No! the lightnin'
 should respect
The good Lord's house o' meetin'—an' he riz up
 to object!

He wuz sparkin' of a widder: When it come the
 marriage day
An' the preacher asked the people if they had
 a word to say
Why they shouldn't be united fer weal as well
 as woe,
He hollowed, "I object, sir!" an' the widder's
 cake wuz dough!

Contrariest o' fellers in the country, I'll be
boun'!

Warn't no doing nuthin' w'en you see him settin'
roun'!

An' when he gits to glory—ef his baggage thar
is checked,

It's my belief St. Peter'll shet him out with, “I
object!”

WORTH IT

With its thorns and roses
With its storm and strife,
Still it's worth the living—
This dream that we call Life.

HE'S ALWAYS WANTING MORE

The feller that would "hold his ground"—
you've heard of him before:
He wants about ten acres, then he's wantin'
twenty more;
But that's the reason that you know a heaven is
to be:
There jes' ain't no contentment in this world
for you an' me!

It's on an' on forever:
One land seems heaven-bright,
But something allus whispers:
"There's a better land in sight!"

It's good we're not contented an' never go the
length;
It's still another hilltop—a step from strength
to strength;
You may shout yer halleluia when you think
you've gained the heights
But higher hosts are beckoning to the glory o'
the lights.

For it's on an' on forever!
No valley's of despair;
From Promised Land to Promised Land,
The best "just over There!"

LOVE TO LOVE

Come home, come home, my dearie,
For the light leaves hill and plain,
And the mists gloom gray and the green's away,
And love's in the cold and rain.

Come home, come home, my dearie,
The ships sail over the sea,
And the sailor sights the harbor lights,
But my dearie comes not to me.

BACK TO THE OLD HOME

'Twuz good to git back home again—to see the
boys once more
Out thar, a-playin' checkers, by the old-time
grocery store,
Just like as in the old days 'neath the chinaberry
tree;
“Seven up” on the old pine box, an’ “deal a
hand fer me!”

At first they didn't know me—fer time had
slipped away,
An' I came back with a beaver-hat, an' hair a
little gray;
But something in my voice brought back the
days that used to be,
When I hollered: “If it's ‘seven up,’ jes' deal a
hand fer me!”

Doc Brown riz up an' shouted: “It's him—it's
him, fer shore!”
An' “Burt”—he left a customer thar, in the
grocery store;
An' others came aroun' me, an' eyed me, up an'
down:
“It's checkers, an' it's ‘seven up’ that brought
him back to town!”

An' I said: “You shure have hit it!”—they wuz
glad as glad could be;

They made room at the old pine box, an' dealt
a hand to me!

An' such a lively game it wuz! an' this here will
I say:

If ever Hearts wuz trumps in life, they shore
wuz trumps that day!

THE OLD BOYS

I.

The young folks sorter crowd 'em,
An' make 'em foam an' fret;
But there's lots o' life, believers,
In the
Old
Boys
Yet!

II.

They kissed their sweethearts at the gate
In the days they'll not forget,
An' there's life an' love amazin'
In the
Old
Boys
Yet!

III.

So, when you start the music
An' form the dancin' set,
Make room!—an' remember
You'll be
Old
Boys
Yet!

MY HONEY

I.

So still and sweet in the rockaby place,
Brown curls o'er the brow so sunny;
The light of heaven in his dreaming face—
What are you dreaming of, honey?
To you there is never a Long Ago,—
Only the roses of life you know.

II

The little troubles were lost away
Ere a twilight star was beaming;
Lost in the light of the joyous day—
No tears in a little one's dreaming.
Mine is the grief of the Long Ago,—
Only the roses of life you know.

NO CROSS, NO CROWN

I.

I sometimes think, when life seems drear
And gloom and darkness gather here;
When Hope's bright star forsakes my skies
And sorrow o'er my pathway lies,
It would be sweet, it would be best
To fold my tired hands and rest;
But then God sends an angel down
Who sweetly says: "No Cross, no Crown."

II.

I heard the reckless river moan
With sad and melancholy tone;
I saw its waters flashing free
And dashing to the distant sea.
I would have plunged beneath its tide
And on its friendly bosom died,
But then God sent the angel down
Who whispered sweet: "No Cross, no Crown."

III.

Then turned I from the river's shore
To bear my bitter task once more;
With aching heart and burning head
To battle for my crust of bread.
But Hunger came, who knew me well,
And fainting by the way I fell;
But still the angel fluttered down,
And weeping said: "No Cross, no Crown."

IV.

No Cross, no Crown! While standing there
The cross too heavy seemed to bear,
And for the crown—I could not see
That it was ever meant for me!
The words I could not understand
E'en while I pressed the angel's hand;
But still he looked with pity down,
And still he said, “No Cross, no Crown.”

V.

I said: “The world is dark and lone;
There is no hand to hold my own:
I cannot bear the noonday heat,
The sharp thorns pierce my bleeding feet!”
“Behold,” he cried, “where, sacrificed,
Shine the red, bleeding wounds of Christ!”
And fell his tears of mercy down
While still he said: “No Cross, no Crown.”

VI.

Back to the world I turned again
To court life's joys, endure its pain,
But all the sweetness that it gave
I followed weeping to the grave;
And from the cold and quiet sod
I raised my streaming eyes to God,
And saw the angel coming down
And in his hand a golden Crown!

VII

Then did I laugh at earthly loss,
And, kneeling, lifted up the cross,
Though all that once made life so sweet
Lay 'neath the lilies at my feet.
A radiance from the realms of light
Flashed for a moment on my sight;
A still, small voice came fluttering down.
"It is enough. Receive the Crown!"

A MORNING GLORY DOOR

I.

All the time I'm longin'
For the old-time country ranch,
Where the little bare-foot fellows
Went wadin' in the branch.
Longin' for to go there—
For it's twenty years, and more
Since we heard a mother callin'
From a Mornin'-Glory Door.

II.

From the thunder-city
You glimpse the welcome pines,
A glad breeze bears a message
From violets and vines;
Oh, you're longin' still to go there
See the loved home-stars once more,
With sweet home-voices callin'
From a Mornin'-Glory Door.

LOVE'S MORNING

A little cottage door I see,
 And flowers, and vines, and skies of blue,
And you were heaven and earth to me,
 And I was all the world to you.
 (With songs and sighs,
 Sweetheart, Life flies,—
O then 'twas Morning in Life's skies!)

You waited at that cottage door
 When ended were the tasks of day,
And, homeward, loving home the more,
 I heard my heart beat all the way!
 (Now sweet appears
 The dream of years!
How sad to pay the price of tears!)

I wonder, had we never known
 The false lure of a dream afar,—
Had claimed but Love for all our own,
 If steadfast still would shine Love's star?
 (How change and tide,
 Sweetheart, divide,
And leave the Shadow at Love's side!)

A little cottage door I see—
 Above reaped fields the sad doves fly:
You are not there to welcome me,—
 To kiss good morning and good-bye.
 (With songs and sighs,
 Sweetheart, Life flies:
But once 'twas Morning in Life's skies!)

THE LADY OF THE STORMS

The Lady of the Storms in a palace of clouds,
She ruled all the elements there;
The stars fled her face—grouped in little scared
crowds

And the sad moon looked on in despair!
Dark spirits were round her—weird, phantom-
like forms;

The queen o' the clouds is the Lady of Storms.

But sad is her life in her thunder-estate,
For she married the lightning, they say;
She storms at him early, she storms at him late,
And he's always a-running away!
When he sees her brows darken—a storm's
coming on,
He leaps through the door of a cloud and he's
gone!

LIFE'S FADING LIGHT

Dear heart, the light is dying:—Let us go,
And dream of rest there 'neath the flowers and
snow!

Life for a little space was sweet to know;
But now the light is fading:—Let us go!

We have known Love's morning,—and the
afterglow

Falls now where we shall neither reap nor sow:
We have loved each other—for God willed it so:
Dear heart, the light is fading:—Let us go!

TO A MOTHER

Your gentle hand still beckons through the
years

When, weary of the way, I fain would rest,
And as a child, from Life's dark thorns and
tears,

Fly to the refuge of a Mother's breast,
Tho night falls deep where sad the wanderers
roam,—

Your child is coming home.

The wounding world has left its battle-scars
On brow and breast, and some heart-veiled
from view;

But in the lovelight of the sweet home-stars
I come for rest and recompense to you.
What is Fame's laurel? What all world-re-
nown?

Your love has been my crown.

Love that shall lead when the last night draws
near,

The journey done, the heaven of rest in
sight:

Your living love, to light the shadows there
With arms around, to kiss your child good-
night.

To sleep the last sleep as earth fades from view
And wake in heaven with you.

LOVE'S STARS

Dear heart, of brave endeavor,
 Heed not the storms that fall;
Forever and forever
 Love's stars shine over all.

And though the night be long, dear,
 And thick with thorns and foes,
The morn will be a song, dear—
 A recompense—a rose!

THE FIRE'S STORY

Fire, talking through the night
What no one understands,
Angry, too, as though you'd fight
The friends who warm their hands;
What's the trouble that you know
Keeps you always talking so?

“I burned a martyr long ago
Upon a funeral pyre;
I burned a witch in Salem Town
At a mad mob's desire.
Beneath a black sky's thunder-frown
I burned a holy temple down.

“And homes, about whose doorways
The little children played
In spring and summer sunshine,
All desolate I made!
I tell the tales of Long Ago,
And that is why I'm talking so!”

But blessed be the Fire,
For all its wrath and wrong;
The children gather round it
And say, “It sings a song!”
So, sing to them till morning light
Drives far the dreams that haunt the Night!

THE KIDDIES

Just let 'em make all the noise
 They want to—that's what I say.
Never was yet any children
 That ever got into my way.
Talk about rompin' an' stompin'—
 Bless you it's joy to my soul,
An' never a child was too little
 For these big arms to hug and to hold.

“DOROTHY”

I.

Song of a little dreamer
Who brings the brightening skies,—
Doesn't know her name yet,
And looking 'round—so wise!
With sweeter song than I can sing
She'll soothe a world of sighs.

II.

Song of a little dreamer,
Where lights and shadows fall:
For her the lights of starry nights
Where fairy voices call;
For she is still Love's sweetest dream
And sweetest song of all!

THE BAIT-DIGGER SPEAKS

Dad is the best one
At tellin' fishin'-tales,
How in the littlest river
He's hooked the Jonah-whales.

How he ketches 'em a-plenty
With his trusty fishin' rig,
An' he'd bring 'em home, to prove it,
But they're too amazin' big!

HIS VALENTINE

The day comes joyous to this heart o' mine,
 For the sweet old woman is my valentine!
 She sits there, knitting, in a gown of gray,
 And smiles when I tell her that it's Valentine
 Day!

She knows!—And her eyes have a springtime
 shine—

That sweet old woman who's my Valentine!

She leaves her knitting where the bright light
 streams,

And I see her rummage in a Place of Dreams
 Where she keeps old letters and a thousand
 things—

Faded flowers of remembered springs!
 And she takes one missive of a quaint design—
 Love's first letter: “To My Valentine!”

O the day comes joyous! For the long years
 know

That Love grows sweeter as the seasons go;
 That there's still a blossom on the withered
 bough,

And the boy's first sweetheart is the old man's
 now!

She knows!—And her eyes have the Springtime
 shine—

That sweet old woman who's my Valentine!

WHICH WAY?

Two paths that lead to darkness and to day:

Which way?

Here, the fair flowers—there, the thorns that
slay:

Which way?

Here, Love sings Truth—there, hates and
shames betray:

Which way?

THE WINGS OF SONG

Last eve a strain of music that you know
Came—like a ghost from a remembered
day

And led me where the lovelier lilies blow,
To you,—so far away!

And all the grief of all the lonesome years—
The desolate, black barriers of wrong,
Fled: and the sunlight glimmered through
Love's tears:—
Love took the wings of song!

THE LENGTHENING DAYS

The days are gettin' longer, an' a fellow wants
to go

Where the clods are takin' color, an' the rivers
as they flow

Sing drowsy songs o' Springtime; where the
grass is green an' deep

An' birds an' bees conspirin' for to sing his soul
to sleep!

The shiny plow is turnin' of the sod in fields that
soon

Shall feel the seed a-climbin' to the rosy kiss of
June;

An' the way the birds are wranglin' all roun'
from east to west,

They're in lots o' tribulation 'bout the buildin'
o' the nest.

There's a springy sorter feelin' in the country
all about;

The sun is doin' of his best to coax the blossoms
out;

An' they'll be here in good measure—jes' all
your arms can hol'—

An' you'll feel the light a-shinin' through the
windows of your soul!

ONE DAY

O Fate, that follows on the darkest way,
Give back one day!

From the dead past, with storm or starry ray
Give back one day!

No day when earth laid treasure at my feet,
But one more sweet:—

The day she said she loved me, and I knew
Her soul was true!

A SONG OF CHANGE

Sunshine's not as bright today,
Dear, as in the far away.
So I'm sighing every minute
Since you're framed no longer in it!
Spring has less of flower and song,
Winter lonesome, and so long!
Not the same sweet world today,
Dear, as in the far away!

Yet, if you should come again—
Dreamlike, in the mist and rain,
Sweetest birds to heaven would sing,
Winter's lips breathe blooms of spring!
All life's sweets the world would know,
All the dim, dead violets blow,
And the world be sweet today,
Dear, as in the far away!

THE RACE FOR REST

I followed one night the lightning's lead,
 And I heard the thunder rave,
 When a horseman passed on a foam-white
 steed,
 And galloped before to my grave!

And the grave is mine—is mine, I said,
 When I heard the sexton cry:
 “First come, first served with a peaceful bed:—
 Rest for you by and by!”

Then I went my way to the morning light,
 Till I stood where my grave should be,
 And a woman wailed, with lips death-white:
 “Oh, give thy grave to me!

“For I am weary of grief and moan—
 The life-thorns wound my breast;
 I have sighed in the desolate dark alone—
 I have prayed so long for rest!”

And then came one whose face I knew,
 And said, with anguish deep:
 “These little feet were weary, too,—
 This little child would sleep!”

And in dark and light this word was said:
 “These, too, have lived to sigh:
 Let the weariest rest on a dreamless bed—
 Rest for you by and by!”

WHEN I MISS YOU FROM THE LIGHT

It's still a world of beauty—broad plains, and
hills of light;
A wilderness of color, and over all the bright,
The cloudless sunshine streaming, so that each
breathing clod
Is sending still sweet messages up to the skies
of God.

But something still is missing from the season's
joy and grace:—
The sweeter music of your voice—the sunshine
of your face!
The sunlight streaming 'round me hath little
that is bright
When I miss you from the blossoms—when I
miss you from the light!

AN ANSWER

When your dear eyes made the darkness bright
I could but dream of light:
Now, dear, that they have vanished from my
sight
The world is Night!

Where are your footsteps—in what paths
unknown,
Thick with roses sown?
Though I walk, dear, in ways with thorns o'er
grown,
May you not walk alone!

A SMILE WHEN YOU WANT TO SIGH

The storm, with never a warnin',
The shadows in the sky,
But—tellin' the world good mornin'
With a smile, when you want to sigh.

When you wake from your lonesome dreaming,
And the teardrop dims the eye,
Say Sorrow is only seeming;—
A smile, when you want to sigh.

When the homeless wind is grievin'
For roses as they die,
An' the light o' the world you're leavin'—
A smile, when you want to sigh!

THE COMFORTER

Even when there seems no love to win,
And Life is sad to see,
Hope, like a dream, comes softly in,
And says sweet words to me!

And then the darkness disappears
And Joy's a vision bright,
And light comes glimmering through my tears,
And all of heaven's in sight!

"WHERE'S THE TRAIN FOR HOME?"

Queerest kind o' fellow—never liked to roam;
All the time a-askin': "Whar's the train fer
home?"

Couldn't get untangled from the flowerin'
vines—

Loved that little village down thar in the pines.

Queerest kind o' fellow—hardly left the track
'Fore he'd be a-writin': "Folks, I'm comin'
back!"

Nothin' couldn't hold him:—sure to find him
still

Comin' down the big road, back to Wells' Mill.

Way he's raised, I reckon:—Jes' content to be
In the ol' home-pasture whar he felt so free,
An' thar they'll hoe an' plow him, an' never let
him roam,

Forevermore a-askin': "Whar's the road fer
home?"

THE SIGH IN THE SONG

Dear, when the beautiful world goes wrong—
And the sigh is heard in the sweetest song,

Say to the Night:

“There will be Light,—

Love is kissing the darkness white.”

Sorrow and sighing—but still we rest
Living—dying, on Love’s dear breast:

Out of the Night

The dawn of Light!

Love is kissing the darkness white.”

WHEN SONG IS SWEET

Skies are only sweet and fair
In your eyes of blue;
Song is only sweet, my dear,
When I sing of you!

Spring hath many a rose to wear
Kissed of sun and dew;
They are only sweet, my dear,
When they bloom for you!

What the sigh, or what the tear?
Toil, or deeds to do?
Life is only sweet, my dear,
When 'tis lived for you!

“THAT’S MY BOY!”

When the news came home of his first fine fight
Where the boys “lit into ’em,” left and right,
And scored in the battle’s blazing track
Where the hardest work was to “hold ’em
back,”—

When the news came home, of all words we said
(Prouder than any written or read!)

HER’S told the story of still, deep joy:—

“That’s My Boy!”

We know how it was when she let him go—
(For all that the mothers hide it so!)

Knew when he answered, quick to the call,
That that one woman was giving ALL!

Dreams of battles were in her eyes,

But he didn’t go under rainy skies!

No time for tears—where they cheered for joy!

“That’s Her Boy!”

Lord, send the good news over the foam
To the waiting women whose love makes
“Home!”

And send them safe to the hearts again
That are fighting the battles along with the
men!

That a world of mothers may proudly say,
In the glory-light of the Victory-Day,
While the heart of the Nation thrills with joy:

“That’s My Boy!”

WHEN THE BOY WRITES HOME

I.

It's all 'round the settlement—they know it fur
an' nigh,
Like the Wind had took an' told it as it went
a-singin' by!
The birds tune up the sweeter, the rainbow
takes the sky
When the boy writes home from the Army.

II.

The wrote words run together in the readin' o'
the tale,—
It's a rain o' joy for "Mother"—makes the eye-
sight kind o' fail;
An' the Lord send all His blessin's on the man
that brung the mail,—
When the boy writes home from the Army.

III.

The Chimbly Corner listens—allus fearin' fer
the wust!
But one word's hopeful hailin' makes us take
the next on trust!
An' we most fergive the censor-man fer readin'
of it fust,
When the boy writes home from the Army.

IV.

Lord love him fer the letter, where he's fightin'
fer to win,
An' send him, when it's over, to his Mother's
heart ag'in';
But they ain't a heart that's beatin' but would
tell him: "March right in!"
When the boy comes home from the Army!

It's no use ter put on yo' Sunday-meetin'
clothes ef de heart what's under 'em needs
whitewashin'!

"I never wuz good at 'rithmetics," says
Brother Williams, "but I holds it a blessin' dat I
can't figger out my troubles!"

HIS "CHRISTMAS BOX"

I.

Fixin' for His Christmas box there's trouble
every minute!
The whole amazin' family is wantin' to be in it!
An' what to do to get it through is more than
we're a-knowin',
Since all we say an' pack away can't 'pay the
debt we're owin'!

II.

We've had "instructin'," good an' plain—the
government's direction—
An' Mother says: "Of course there'll be that
censor man's inspection!
He'll have the 'see' an' have the 'say' before he
starts it goin',
An' what's for Jimmy Christmas Day he'll know
'fore Jimmy's knowin'!"

III.

That's how the folks are takin' on—the biggest
home-commotion!
It's like 'twas movin' day for home 'cross Christ-
mas miles of ocean!
An' Dad there—sharin' of our joy—is heard
above the hummin':
"Just send a cable to the boy: "We're all of us
a-comin'!"

IV.

An' Mother's eyes run over then: "She'd give up
 this an' t'other
 If she could stand there, Christmas Day, an' tell
 him: 'Here's your Mother!' "
 An' what would he say?—Bless the boy, he'd
 kiss her, as he's crowned her,
 An' not a world o' wars could keep his arms
 from goin' 'round her!

V.

God bless 'em here, an' Over There—the boys
 that do the fightin',
 They know the homes that hold 'em dear; an'
 when the lamps we're lightin'
 For Christmas times an' Christmas chimes,
 they'll know we think about 'em,
 An' only for the country's sake keep Christmas
 home without 'em.

THE TELEGRAM MAN

I.

Here comes the telegram-man 'cross the hill,—
Somethin's done happened, I know!
Fer the goodness gracious—can't you all keep
still?
Somethin's done happened, I know!
We ain't had a letter from the boy Over There—
It's a month, come Sunday,—not a day to
spare!
Wounded fightin'—or, a bomb from the air!
Somethin's done happened, I know!

II.

O why don't he come, if he hopes for to go?
Somethin's done happened, I know!
If 'twas good news, people, would he creep so
slow?
Somethin's done happened, I know!
O I never did favor that telegram-man—
Him an' his likes bringin' trouble to the
lan'!
But—children, run an' meet him! he's a-wavin'
of his han'!—
Somethin' ain't happened, I know!

III.

“Billy an’ the home-boys Over the Top!”—
 (Billy was a-leadin’, I know!)
“Wouldn’t hear to nothin’ when they hollered
 when to stop!”
 (Jes’ like the home-boys, you know!)
“Cleaned up the enemy!—Didn’t git a scratch!”
Them’s the boys was brung up from the corn
 an’ cotton patch!
An’—the man that brung the telegram, he’s in
 a huggin’ match!—
 He’s the best one goin’—high or low!

“Is it a full-dress party?” asked the Billville lover.

“Look here, Bill,” replied the maiden, “You come here full, an’ I’ll lamm you ’side the head with a flatiron!”

"THE DEAR OLD DAYS"

Gimme back the dear old days—all the boys in
line—

"Boy stood on the burnin' deck," an' "Bingen
on the Rhine!"

"'Twas midnight; in the guarded tent"—we
spoke it high an' low,

While Mary trotted out that lamb, "whose fleece
was white as snow."

Gimme back the dear old days that memory
loves to keep,

With "Pilot, 'tis a fearful night—there's danger
on the deep!"

The old-time, awkward gestures—the jerk,
meant for a bow:—

We said that "curfew should not ring," but
Lord! they want it now!

Gimme back the dear old days—the pathway
through the dells

To the schoolhouse in the blossoms: the sound
of far off bells

Tinklin' 'crost the meadows; the song of bird
and brook;

The old-time dictionary, an' the blue-back
spellin' book!

Gone, like a dream, forever!—A city's hid the
place

Where stood the old log schoolhouse; an' no
familiar face

Is smilin' there in welcome beneath a mornin'
sky:—

There's a bridge acrost the river; an' we've
crossed, an said “Goodbye!”

TOMORROW

This world has got its share of woe—
It's mighty full of sorrow,
But thank the Lord, we never know
What's comin' on tomorrow!

An' that's why in hope we go,
An' lots of peace we borrow;
It's happiness just not to know
What's comin' on tomorrow!

“SINCE FROM THE DEEPS”

Since from the red deeps of the mourning May
Your spirit passed, I have not known de-
light:

Through sudden dark the stars stare,
coldly white,
And cheerless seems the morn's returning ray.

Flowers that would wreathe the forehead of
the day

Fall withering from their stems; and win-
ter's might

Dashes the bloom down in Love's weeping
sight,

And all the skies of spring are ghostly gray.

The rivers seem to mourn their way to sea:—

Over the sad fields the lamenting doves
(Where late the thrushes piped melodiously)

Call to their lost and unreplying loves.

And I, in dim and desolated lands

Still stretch to you Love's unavailing hands!

O ivied windows where the light is dead!

O garden-ways, once beautiful and sweet!

O heart, that listens, all uncomforted,

Through lonely years for unreturning feet!

There shall be rest, for all the dark ways trod,

Under the daisies and the stars of God.

LIGHT IN NIGHT

I.

Bleak winds across the meadows, and the
night—

No stars shine from the blue;
But over all, the unforgotten light
In the dear eyes of you.

II.

In what strange pathways may your footsteps
be

I may not dream or know;
Only this joy comes in the dark to me,—
That I have loved you so!

III.

It was not much to love—O heart of mine,
All that was pure and bright:—
Robes of red wrath and crimson to resign
For raiment that is white.

IV.

It was not much to yield earth's gold and dross
For realms with joy replete;
And, in the darkness, clinging to a cross,
Find mercy at your feet.

V.

So, night is never night when the sweet thought
Of Love is with us still:
If to Love's cross our scourged, sad limbs are
brought,
Lo! Love is with us still!

VI.

O winds across the meadows and the night!
O stars that leave the blue!
There shines, sweetheart, the unforgotten light
In the dear eyes of you!

THE SPIRIT OF PEACE

I shall be dreaming when you come; but I
 Shall know it by the dim and misty hills
 Enthroned in light—the ripple of the rills,
The May-sweet meadows and the glorious sky!
The gardens where the summer would not die
 For love of you! The Morning that fulfills
 The promise of the desolate Dark that wills
The death of stars, and dreams o'er which we
 sigh.

Speak not, nor touch my hand that day—that
 day,
 Lest Joy should slay me! Only let your
 glance
Fall full on mine, as in life's golden years,
And I shall read all that your lips would say
 And, like a dreamer, 'wakened from a
 trance,
Gaze on the world with wonder and glad tears!

JUST SINGING

When clouds threw shadows o'er the sky,
And all the world seemed like a sigh,
He found a ray of sunshine by
Just singing!

Not that his heart was happy—no!
But, like a river in its flow,
The music ever made it so—
Just singing!

And cheeks forgot the falling tear,
And souls in valleys dim drew near—
Crept to him in the dark to hear
That singing!

It led from grief, and gloom, and loss—
It led from seas where billows toss,
To light, illumining the cross—
That singing!

Sing! Sing! When sound the stormy knells,
When high the darkening tempest swells;
Sing! Sing! and hear the harbor-bells
Just singing!

KEEP ON!

The sky looks dark, and sorrow hides
The glory of the dawn,
Yet hope is ours, and love abides;
Keep on! Keep on!

The bitter sorrow soon is past —
The shadows will be gone,
And light shall crown our lives at last:
Keep on! Keep on!

THE FAIRY OF THE TREE

There's folks that love their money, yet I'm
 thinkin' it ain't all—
 The flowers of the springtime, an' the reapin' of
 the fall;
 There's something that's a-sayin' of a sweeter
 thought to me,—
 A little gleam of golden hair that hid behind a
 tree.

A tree whose boughs waved welcome to the
 weary ones that roam,
 Where Darkness made the mockingbirds to sing
 the songs of “Home!”
 But the birds knew not the secret, in the dark or
 starlight fair—
 The fairy of the oak tree, who was waiting for
 me there!

I shall love the trees forever, through my life,
 lone and unblest,
 Though they drop their leaves like shadows, on
 her still and dreamless breast;
 Though Winter makes them leafless, still a
 glimmer in the air
 Will make me love the loneliness that knew her
 golden hair.

AT EVENSONG

Dear heart, life is not long—

 The shadows deepen, and the waning light
Drifts to the music of the evensong,

 And then—Goodnight!

Dear heart, though Love may live

 In loftier realms, through God's eternal
 years,

'Tis here we need the joy that it can give—

 Its tenderness, its tears.

And yet, such barriers rise

 To keep the outstretched, sundered hands
 apart!

What is fulfillment in the far, faint skies

 When earth is dumb, dear heart?

THE LETTER TO THE HOME FOLKS

We've had the long vacation—all happens for
the best;
But life is just as short as cash: We're coming
home to rest.

(Do put the house to rights, and see
That things are just as they should be:
By care we should not be opprest
When we are coming home to rest.)

Tell Father to meet us at the train—if it be soon
or late:
(Our board bills were so heavy, they were
shipped to him by freight.)

Though steep were all the bills we made,
Fast as they come, please have them paid,
That not one sigh may thrill the breast
The day that we come home to rest.

THE WORLD MOVES ON

Who stood upon the hills lies low
Beneath the blossoms and the snow;
Like dreams we come, like dreams we go,—
The world moves on!

And this one leads the world, and men
Look not to see his like again;
He fades even in a breath, and then
The world moves on!

Poor shadows 'neath the eternal sun—
Driftwood on streams that seaward run;
The word is said, the task is done,—
The world moves on!

IT WAS THE “PIANNER”

Moll had the best young feller in all the neighborhood;
 The gals all envied her, an' said he'd marry her
 —he would;
 They'd been a-keepin' company, an' 'bout a year
 had gone:
 The ring, it cost ten dollars, an' Moll—she had
 it on!

But Moll got a pianner—the best what could be
 found.
 (It must o' been a good one, fer it weighed six
 hundred pound!)

It had a voice like thunder—its keys wuz black
 an' white,
 An' Moll, she played it all day long, n'er give it
 rest at night!

She kept it goin' constant—no matter what
 they'd say;
 Her feller had to listen, fer he couldn't git
 away!

An' I'm sorry for to tell it,—but the neighbors
 say it's so:—
 Moll's got the ol' pianner yit, but Moll ain't got
 no beau!

THIS WORLD

This world that we're a-livin' in
Is mighty hard to beat;
You get a thorn with every rose,
But *ain't* the roses *sweet*?

—Comes One With a Song, Bobbs-Merrill, 1898.

LET US BELIEVE

Let us believe
That there is hope for all the hearts that grieve;

That somewhere night
Drifts to a morning beautiful with light.

And that the wrong—
Though now it triumph, wields no scepter long.

But Right will reign
Throned where the waves of Error beat in vain!

“FIVE FLIGHTS UP”

Rickety stairs and rickety chairs
 And rickety tables, too;
 (The kind gods answer my daily prayers
 With beautiful dreams of you!)
 A broken bust of the wise and just
 (Ah, life and fame are fleet!)
 All save my heart is dim with dust,
 And that's where your face is, sweet!

But here is a song for you—soft and sweet
 As ever a song may be—
 For it bears your name, and what is fame
 To the music it makes for me?
 A song, my dear, that has not a tear—
 No sigh from the lips that pray
 For only the touch that I loved so much
 To lighten the lonely way.

A song—it is folded away in this,
 A song of Maytime sky,
 With a rose whose crimson has known your kiss
 In the beautiful days gone by.
 Rickety stairs and rickety chairs
 And rickety tables, too;
 But night and light and the whole world bright
 With beautiful dreams of you!

WHEN YOU GO HOME

When you go Home, so lonely
 Will all the wide world be,
Look back, dear love, from o'er the lights—
 Look back and beckon me!

For the day will then be darkness—
 No shore-light over sea.
Look back, dear love, from o'er the lights—
 Look back and beckon me!

For sweet were death if, dying,
 Only your face I see.
Look back! look back from o'er the lights,
 Dear love, and beckon me!

IN AN OLD THEATRE

Here of old was my Shakespeare played—
 My Shakespeare crowned and sweet;
 Here was the ancient music made
 For the dancer's nimble feet.
 And what is the tale Time hath to tell
 Of that last fair night when the curtain fell?

My lady was there with her powdered hair
 And her beautiful love-bright eyes,
 The rose on her breast in a gentle unrest,
 Thrilled by her laughter and sighs.
 Queen of beauty, and love that night,
 Her jewels glittering in the light.

What was the play? Of the dark-cloaked
 Dane,
 Or Lear, in his frenzied plight?
 Haply the roses fell like rain
 At the player's feet that night.
 And my lady, moved by his art so sweet,
 Cast even her jewels before his feet!

But the players have passed like a shadowy
 dream,
 Their swords in the scabbards rust;
 No clamor now where the stage-lights gleam,
 And my lady's heart is dust!
 And my own heart thrills to a wilder beat
 Where passeth the ghost of my Shakespeare
 sweet!

THE OLD MAN'S CHRISTMAS

I.

It is past: like a beautiful dream; but sweet was
the dream to me;
For the children came, as in days of old, and
cuddled around my knee;
And I told them the tales I used to tell—ere my
locks were thin and gray—
To the other children of my love: The children
that went away!

II.

I forgot the vacant places—the fall of the
wintry snow;
In the light of their rosy faces I lived in the Long
Ago;
I lived in the Long Ago: But the present was
perfect then;—
For all of the bitter snow that falls on the lives
of men.

III.

I only knew they were near me, in a world made
new again,
And the Winter violets of Life were rimmed
with the Springtime rain;
I felt their kisses sweet on my withered cheeks
and cold;
And saw, over threads of silver, the gleam of
their curls of gold.

IV.

It is past, like a beautiful dream; with all the
songs that were sung;
And I feel, in the after Silence, that the world is
for the young;
And thanks be to God that the world is so, with
all its sunny years:—
That at least, one time in our lives, we know
kisses, and love, and tears!

LOVE'S WAY

Wherever Love shall lead
There let us follow, sweet,
In every dream and deed—
Whatever foes we meet.

THE OLD BLUEBACK SPELLER

I.

Talk about yer big "Best Seller" in yer books of
Spring an' Fall;
That 'ere ol'-time Blueback Speller takes the
shine from off 'em all!
Been writ up in song an' story from a time too
far to tell,
Since it taught yer great-grand-daddies jest the
finest way to spell.

II.

Ain't it tho' familiar lookin', with a back almost
as blue
As you thought yer own was—yonder, when the
"hickories" talked to you!
How it takes you back to boyhood—all the
unforgotten scenes;
What are all yer jingling dollars to the marbles
in yer jeans?

III.

Jest the friendliest feelin' for it! Gave you all
yer first degrees;
Didn't start a chap to readin' 'fore he l'arned his
A B C's.
You began with the beginnin', knowin' that you
could depend
On the promise of the pictures, framed with
fables at the end.

IV.

Same ol' farmer is disputin'—jest as mad as mad
can be—
With the stubborn little feller, high up in the
apple tree;
Don't a glimpse of it remind you when you
shook the apples down
For the rosy little maiden, livin' there, in
“Sweetheart Town?”

V.

Oh, there's been a million changes in the world's
books since the day
That ol'-fashioned Blueback Speller showed the
world's great men the way!
Books that turn an' twist the language, till
you're puzzled, high an' low;
But the Blueback Speller's changeless as the
dreams of Long Ago!

VI.

Loved of humble folk an' statesmen—keepin' all
on l'arnin's track,
All the spellin' bees of Billville wrestled with
the old “Blueback!”
An' the lad that missed the lesson in those old-
time spellin' years,
Like the “Soldier of the Legion,” felt like “dyin'
in Algiers!”

VII.

You jest go up there to Congress, where the
Senators orate—

'Twas that same old Blueback Speller showed
'em how to "save the State;"

An' jest wander through the White House, when
the Nation's head is there:

'Twas the Blueback Speller helped him to the
Presidential Chair!

VIII.

Never-failin' friend, stay with us—as it seems
you're goin' to do—

Spite of dress-paradin' language, still the
country's needin' you.

Solid worth and solid wisdom, Time'll never
quite destroy—

Stand pat on the Blueback Speller, an' you'll
win the prize, my boy!

KEEP ON HOPIN’

I.

Keep on lookin’ for the bright, bright skies,
Keep on hopin’ that the sun’ll rise;
Keep on singin’ when the whole world sighs,—
And you’ll get there in the mornin’.

II.

Keep on sowin’ when you’ve miss’d the crops,
Keep on dancin’ when the fiddle stops,
Keep on faithful till the curtain drops,—
And you’ll get there in the mornin’.

III.

Keep on trustin’ in the cause of Right,
Keep on lookin’ to the dawn of Light,
Keep on fightin’ till you’ve won the fight,—
And you’ll get there in the mornin’.

THE GARDEN OF PARADISE

They have found the Garden of Paradise—
As they say—in a land apart;
Forgetting that long,
With its light and its song,
It has bloomed in the human heart.

FIGHTING IT THROUGH

Ever and ever the work's to do—
Getting the working swing!
It isn't the fact that we're "seeing it through,"
But fighting it through's the thing!

TO LIZZIE

My thirsting soul would hourly sip,
The dewy-sweetness of thy lip,
My weary head would ever rest
And find its pillow on thy breast!
Encircled by thy snowy arms—
A captive to thy beauteous charms—
My life a blissful dream would be
But oh! thy love is not for me!

No, not for me, O, lovely one!
Are all the charms I gaze upon,
And not for me the smiles that glance
And beam with heavenly radiance!
The words of love you whisper oft
In accents musical and soft,
Are not for me, O maiden fair
And yet are words I love to hear!

That voice of sad and silvery tone,
Hath still a power of its own
That holds me when I seek to go—
I wonder why I love it so?
Its music weaves a mystic spell
Which oft enchants my life so well
That when I fancy I am free
My very soul is chained to thee!

EDITOR'S NOTE: This poem was found in the "Boyhood Scrapbook" of the late Frank L. Stanton, and is said to be the first of his poems ever published; written by the Stanton lad at the age of eleven.

NEW YEAR TEXT

"Tain't no use to sit an' sigh
For the things you've let slip by;
Whilst the light is in the sky,
Ketch the next ones on the fly.

Sighin' when the ship is tossed
Don't bring back the haven lost;
Best to keep your self-command,
Hope for land, hope for land!

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the last published poem of the late and beloved Frank L. Stanton, appearing in his world-famous column, "Just From Georgia," in The Atlanta Constitution, Christmas morning, 1926.

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